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SMALL COUNTRY NEIGHBORS*

BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT

SMALL mammals, with the exception of squirrels, are so much less conspicuous than birds, and indeed usually pass their lives in such seclusion, that the ordinary observer is hardly aware of their presence. At Sagamore Hill, for instance, except at haying time, I rarely see the swarming meadow mice, the much less plentiful pine mice, or the little mole shrews, alive, unless they happen to drop into a pit or sunken area which has been dug at one point to let light through a window into the cellar. The much more graceful and attractive white-footed mice and jumping mice are almost as rarely seen, though if one does come across a jumping mouse it at once attracts attention by its extraordinary leaps. The jumping mouse hibernates, like the woodchuck and chipmunk. The other little animals just mentioned are abroad all winter, the meadow mice under the snow, the white-footed mice, and often the shrews, above the snow. The tell-tale snow, showing all the tracks, betrays the hitherto unsuspected existence of many little creatures; and the commonest marks upon it are those of the rabbit and especially of the white-footed mouse. The shrew walks or trots and makes alternate footsteps in the snow. White-foot, on the contrary, always jumps, whether going slow or fast, and his hind feet leave their prints side by side, often with the mark where the tail has dragged. I think white-foot is the most plentiful of all our furred wild creatures, taken as a whole. He climbs trees well; I have found his nest in an old vireo's nest; but more often under stumps or boards. The meadow mice often live in the marshes and are entirely at home in the water.

The shrew mouse which I most often find is a short-tailed, rather thick-set little creature, not wholly unlike his cousin the shrew mole, and just as greedy and ferocious. When a boy I captured one of these mole-shrews and found to my astonishment that he was a bloodthirsty and formidable little beast of prey. He speedily killed and ate a partially grown white-footed mouse which I put in the same cage with him. (I think a full-grown mouse of this kind would be an overmatch for a shrew.) I then put a small snake in with him. The shrew was very active but seemed nearly blind, and as he ran to and fro he never seemed to be aware of the presence of anything living until he was close to it, when he would instantly spring on it like a tiger. On this occasion he attacked the little snake with great ferocity, and after an animated struggle in which the snake whipped and rolled all around the cage, throwing the shrew to and fro a dozen times, the latter killed and ate the snake in triumph. Larger snakes frequently eat shrews, by the way.

One of my boys—the special friend of Josiah the badger—once discovered a flying-squirrel's nest, in connection with which a rather curious incident occurred. The little boy had climbed a tree which is hollow at the top; and in this hollow he discovered a flying-squirrel mother with six young ones. She seemed so tame and friendly that the little boy for a moment hardly realized that

*This will appear as a supplementary chapter in the new edition of "Outdoor Pastimes of an American Hunter," by Theodore Roosevelt.

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she was a wild thing, and called down that he had "found a guinea-pig up the tree." Finally the mother made up her mind to remove her family. She took each one in turn in her mouth and flew or sailed down from the top of the tree to the foot of another tree nearby; ran up this, holding the little squirrel in her mouth; and again sailed down to the foot of another tree some distance off. Here she deposited her young one on the grass, and then, reversing the process, climbed and sailed back to the tree where the nest was; then she took out another young one and returned with it, in exactly the same fashion as with the first. She repeated this until all six of the young ones were laid on the bank, side by side in a row, all with their heads the same way. Finding that she was not molested she ultimately took all six of the little fellows back to her nest, where she reared her brood undisturbed.

Among the small mammals at Sagamore Hill the chipmunks are the most familiar and the most in evidence; for they readily become tame and confiding. For three or four years a chipmunk—I suppose the same chipmunk—has lived near the tennis court; and it has developed the rather puzzling custom of sometimes scampering across the court while we are in the middle of a game. This has happened two or three times every year, and is rather difficult to explain, for the chipmunk could just as well go round the court, and there seems no possible reason why he should suddenly run out on it while the game is in full swing. If he is seen every one stops to watch him, and then he may himself stop and sit up to look about; but we may not see him until just as he is finishing a frantic scurry across, in imminent danger of being stepped on.

Usually birds are very regular in their habits, so that not only the same species but the same individuals breed in the same places year after year. In spite of their wings they are almost as local as mammals, and the same pair will usually keep to the same immediate neighborhood, where they can always be looked for in their season. There are wooded or brush-grown swampy places not far from the White House where in the spring or summer I can count with certainty upon seeing wrens, chats, and the ground-loving Kentucky warbler; an attractive little bird, which, by the way, itself looks much like a miniature chat. There are other places, in the neighborhood of Rock Creek, where I can be almost certain of finding the blue-gray gnat-catcher, which ranks just next to the humming-bird itself in exquisite daintiness and delicacy. The few pairs of mocking-birds around Washington have just as sharply defined haunts.

Nevertheless it is never possible to tell when one may run across a rare bird, and even birds that are not rare now and then show marked individual idiosyncrasy in turning up, or even breeding, in unexpected places. At Sagamore Hill, for instance, I never knew a purple finch to breed until the summer of 1906. Then two pairs nested with us, one right by the house and the other near the stable. My attention was drawn to them by the bold, cheerful singing of the males, who were spurred to rivalry by one another's voices. In September of the same year, while sitting in a rocking-chair on the broad veranda and looking out over the Sound, I heard the unmistakable "ank-ank" of nut-hatches from a young elm at one corner of the house. I strolled over, expecting to find the white-bellied nut-hatch, which is rather common on Long Island. But instead there were a couple of red-bellied nut-hatches, birds familiar to me in the northern woods, but which I had never before seen at Sagamore Hill. They were tame and fearless, running swiftly up and down the tree trunk and around the limbs while I stood and looked at them not ten feet away. The two younger boys ran out to see them; and then we hunted up their picture in Wilson. I find, by the way, that Audubon's and Wilson's are still the most satisfactory large ornithologies, at least for nature-lovers who are not specialists; but of course any attempt at serious study of our birds means recourse to the numerous and excellent books and pamphlets by recent observers.

In May, 1907, two pairs of robins built their substantial nests, and raised their broods, on the piazza at Sagamore Hill; one over the transom of the north hall door and one over the transom of the south hall door. Only one pair of purple finches returned to us this year; and for the first time in many years no Baltimore orioles built in the elm by the corner of the house; they began their nest, but for some reason left it unfinished. The red-winged blackbirds,

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however, were more plentiful than for years previously, and two pairs made their nests near the old barn, where the grass stood lush and tall; this was the first time they had ever built nearer than the wood-pile pond, and I believe it was owing to the season being so cold and wet. It was perhaps due to the same cause that so many black-throated green warblers spent June and July in the woods on our place; they must have been breeding, though I only noticed the males. Each kept to his own special tract of woodland, among the tops of the tall trees, seeming to prefer the locusts, and throughout June each sang all day long—a drawling, cadenced little warble of five or six notes, usually uttered at intervals of a few seconds; sometimes while the little bird was perched motionless, sometimes as it flitted and crawled actively among the branches. With the resident of one particular grove I became well acquainted, as I was chopping a path through the grove. Every day the little warbler was singing away in the grove when I reached it, one locust tree being his favorite perch. He paid not the slightest attention to my chopping; whereas a pair of downy wood-peckers, and a pair of great crested fly-catchers, both of which, evidently, were likewise nesting near by, were much put out by my presence. While listening to my little black-throated friend I would continually hear the songs of his cousins, the prairie warbler, the redstart, the black-and-white creeper and the Maryland yellow-throat, not to speak of other birds, towhees, oven-birds, thrashers, vireos, and the beautiful golden-voiced wood thrushes.

The black-throated green warbler has seemingly become a regular summer resident of Long Island, for after discovering them on my place I found that two or three bird-loving neighbors were already familiar with them, and I heard them on several different occasions as I rode through the country roundabout. I already knew as summer residents in my neighborhood the following representatives of the warbler family: The oven-bird, chat, black-and-white creeper, Maryland yellow-throat, summer yellow-bird, prairie-warbler, pine-warbler, blue-winged warbler, golden-winged warbler (very rare), blue yellow-backed warbler, and redstart.

The black-throated green as a breeder and summer resident is a newcomer who has extended his range southward. But this same summer I found one warbler, the presence of which, if more than accidental, means that a southern form is extending its range northward. This was the Dominican or yellow-throated warbler. Two of my bird-loving friends are Mrs. E. H. Swan, Jr., and Miss Alice Weeks. On July 4th Mrs. Swan told me that a new warbler, the yellow-throated, was living near their house, and that she and her husband had seen him on several occasions. I was rather skeptical and told her I thought that it must be a Maryland yellow-throat. Mrs. Swan meekly acquiesced in the theory that she might have been mistaken; but two or three days afterwards she sent me word that she and Miss Weeks had seen the bird again, had examined it thoroughly through their glasses and were sure it was a yellow-throated warbler. Accordingly on the morning of the 8th I walked down and met them both near Mrs. Swan's house, about a mile from Sagamore Hill. We did not have to wait long before we heard an unmistakably new warbler song; loud, ringing, sharply accented, just as the yellow-throat's song is described in Chapman's book. At first the little bird kept high in the tops of the pines, but after a while he came to the lower branches and we were able to see him distinctly. Only a glance was needed to show that my two friends were quite right in their identification, and that the bird was undoubtedly the Dominican or yellow-throated warbler. Its bill was as long as that of a black-and-white creeper, in sharp contrast to the bills of the other true wood-warblers, and the olive-gray back, yellow throat and breast, streaked sides, white belly, black cheek and forehead, and white line above eye and spot on the side of the neck, could all be plainly made out. The bird kept continually uttering its loud, sharply modulated and attractive warble. It never left the pines, and though continually on the move, it yet moved with a certain deliberation, like a pine warbler, and not with the fussy agility of most of its kinsfolk. Occasionally it would catch some insect on the wing, but most of the time kept hopping about among the pine needles at the ends of the twig-clusters, or moving along the larger branches, stopping from time to time to sing. Now and then it would sit still on one twig for several

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minutes, singing at short intervals and preening its feathers.

In one apple tree we find a flicker's nest every year; the young make a queer, hissing, bubbling sound, a little like the boiling of a pot. This year one of the young ones fell out; I popped it back into the hole, whereupon its brothers and sisters "boiled" for several minutes, sounding like the cauldron of a small and friendly witch. John Burroughs, and a Long Island neighbor, John Lewis Childs, came to see me one day, in June, 1907; and I was able to show them the various birds of most interest—the purple finch, the black-throated green warbler, the red-wings in their unexpected nesting place by the old barn, and the orchard orioles and yellow-billed cuckoos in the garden.

At the White House we are apt to stroll around the grounds for a few minutes after breakfast; and during the migrations, especially in spring, I often take a pair of field-glasses so as to examine any bird as to the identity of which I am doubtful. From the end of April the warblers pass in troops—myrtle, magnolia, chestnut-sided, bay-breasted, blackburnian, black-throated blue, Canadian, and many others, with at the very end of the season the black-polls; exquisite little birds, but not conspicuous as a rule, except perhaps the blackburnian, whose brilliant orange throat and breast flame when they catch the sunlight as he flits among the trees. The males in their dress of courtship are easily recognized by any one who has Chapman's book on the warblers. On May 4, 1906, I saw a Cape May warbler, the first I had ever seen. It was in a small pine. It was fearless, allowing a close approach, and as it was a male in high plumage, it was unmistakable.

In 1907, after a very hot week in early March, we had an exceedingly cold and late spring. The first bird I heard sing in the White House grounds was a white-throated sparrow on March 1st, a song sparrow speedily following. The white-throats stayed with us until the middle of May, overlapping the arrival of the indigo buntings; but during the last week in April and first week in May their singing was drowned by the music of the purple finches, which I never before saw in such numbers around the White House. When we sat by the south fountain, under an apple tree then blossoming, sometimes three or four purple finches would be singing in the fragrant bloom overhead. In June a pair of wood thrushes and a pair of black-and-white creepers made their homes in the White House grounds, in addition to our ordinary home-makers, the flickers, red-heads, robins, cat-birds, song sparrows, chippies, summer yellow birds, grackles, and I am sorry to say, crows. A handsome sap-sucker spent a week with us. In this same year five night herons spent January and February in a swampy tract by the Potomac, half a mile or so from the White House.

At Mount Vernon there are of course more birds than there are around the White House, for it is in the country. At present but one mocking-bird sings around the house itself, and in the gardens, and the woods of the immediate neighborhood. Phœbe birds nest at the heads of the columns under the front portico; and a pair—or rather, doubtless, a succession of pairs—has nested in Washington's tomb itself, for the twenty years since I have known it. The cardinals, beautiful in plumage, and with clear ringing voices, are characteristic of the place. I am glad to say that the woods still hold many gray—not red—foxes; the descendants of those which Washington so perseveringly hunted.

At Oyster Bay on a desolate winter afternoon many years ago I shot an Ipswich sparrow on a strip of ice-rimmed beach, where the long coarse grass waved in front of a growth of blue-berries, beach-plums and stunted pines. I think it was the same winter that we were visited not only by flocks of cross-bills, pine linnets, red-polls and pine grosbeaks, but by a number of snowy owls, which flitted to and fro in ghost-like fashion across the wintry landscape and showed themselves far more diurnal in their habits than our native owls. One fall about the same time a pair of duck-hawks appeared off the bay. It was early, before many ducks had come, and they caused havoc among the night herons, which were then very numerous in the marshes around Lloyd's Neck, there being a big heronry in the woods near by. Once I saw a duck-hawk come around the bend of the shore, and dart into a loose gang of young night herons, still in the brown

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Pine Knot.

plumage, which had jumped from the marsh at my approach. The pirate struck down three herons in succession and sailed swiftly on without so much as looking back at his victims. The herons, which are usually rather dull birds, showed every sign of terror whenever the duck-hawk appeared in the distance; whereas, they paid no heed to the fish-hawks as they sailed over head. The little fish-crows are not rare around Washington, though not so common as the ordinary crows; once I shot one at Oyster Bay. They are not so wary as their larger kinsfolk. The soaring turkey buzzards, so beautiful on the wing and so loathsome near by, are seen everywhere around the Capital.

In Albemarle County, Virginia, we have a little place called Pine Knot, where we sometimes go, taking some or all of the children, for a three or four days' outing. It is a mile from the big stock farm "Plain Dealing," belonging to an old friend, Mr. Joseph Wilmer. The trees and flowers are like those of Washington, but their general close resemblance to those of Long Island is set off by certain exceptions. There are osage orange hedges, and in spring many of the roads are bordered with bands of the brilliant yellow blossoms of the flowering broom, introduced by Jefferson. There are great willow oaks here and there in the woods or pastures, and occasional groves of noble tulip trees in the many stretches of forest; these trees growing to a much larger size than on Long Island. As at Washington, among the most plentiful flowers are the demure little Quaker Ladies, which are not found at Sagamore Hill—where we also miss such northern forms as the wake robin and the other trilliums, which used to be among the characteristic marks of spring-time at Albany. At Pine Knot the red bud, dogwood and laurel are plentiful; though in the case of the last two no more so than at Sagamore Hill. The azalea—its Knickerbocker name in New York was pinkster—grows and flowers far more luxuriantly than on Long Island. The moccasin flower and the china blue Virginia

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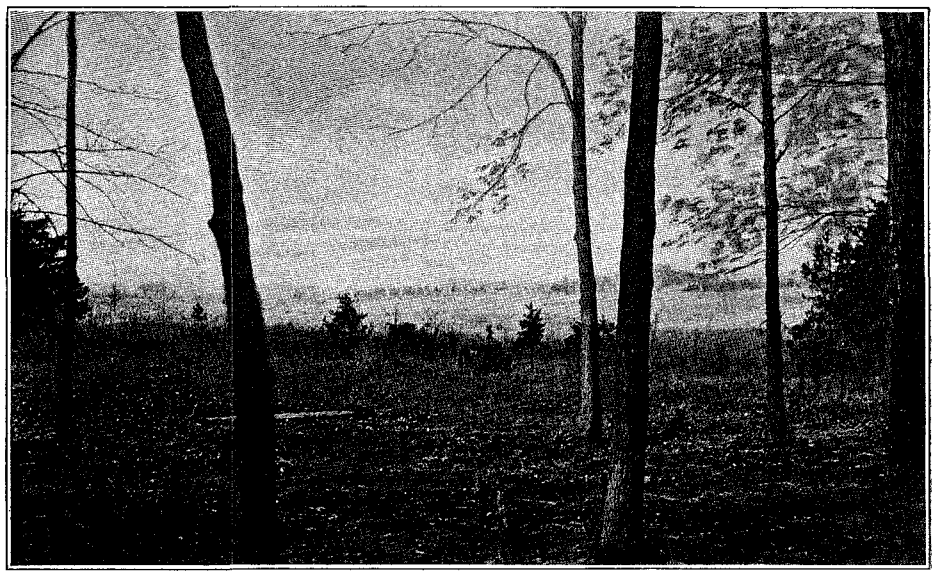

From the veranda at Pine Knot.

cowslip with its pale pink buds, the blood-red Indian pink, the painted columbine, and many, many other flowers somewhat less showy, carpet the woods. The birds are, of course, for the most part the same as on Long Island, but with some differences. These differences are, in part, due to the more southern locality; but in part I cannot explain them, for birds will often be absent from one place seemingly without any real reason. Thus around us in Albemarle County song sparrows are certainly rare and I have not seen Savannah sparrows at all; but the other common sparrows, such as the chippy, field sparrow, vesper sparrow, and grasshopper sparrow abound; and in an open field, where bind-weed morning glories and evening primroses grew among the broom sedge, I found some small grass-dwelling sparrows, which with the exercise of some little patience I was able to study at close quarters with the glasses; as I had no gun I could not be positive about their identification, though I was inclined to believe that they were Henslows sparrows. Of birds of brilliant color there are six species—the cardinal, the summer red-bird and the scarlet tanager, in red, and the blue-bird, indigo bunting, and blue grossbeak, in blue. I saw but one pair of blue grossbeaks; but the little indigo buntings abound, and blue-birds are exceedingly common, breeding in numbers. It has always been a puzzle to me why they do not breed around us at Sagamore Hill, where I only see them during the migrations. Neither the rosy summer red-birds nor the cardinals are quite as brilliant as the scarlet tanagers, which fairly burn like live flames; but the tanager is much less common than either of the others in Albemarle County, and it is much less common than it is at Sagamore Hill. Among the singers the wood-thrush is not common, but the meadow-lark abounds. The yellow-breasted chat is everywhere and in the spring its clucking, whistling, whooping and calling seem never to stop for a minute. The white-eyed vireo is found in the same thick undergrowth as the chat, and among the smaller birds it is one of those most in evidence to the ear. In one or two places I came across parties of the long-tailed Bewick's wren, as familiar as the house wren but with a very different song. There are gentle mourning doves; and black-billed cuckoos seem more common than the yellow-bills. The mocking-birds are, as always, most interesting. I was much amused to see one of them following two crows; when they lit in a plowed field the mocking-bird paraded alongside of them six feet off, and then fluttered around to the attack. The crows, however, were evidently less bothered by it than they would have been by a king-bird. At Plain

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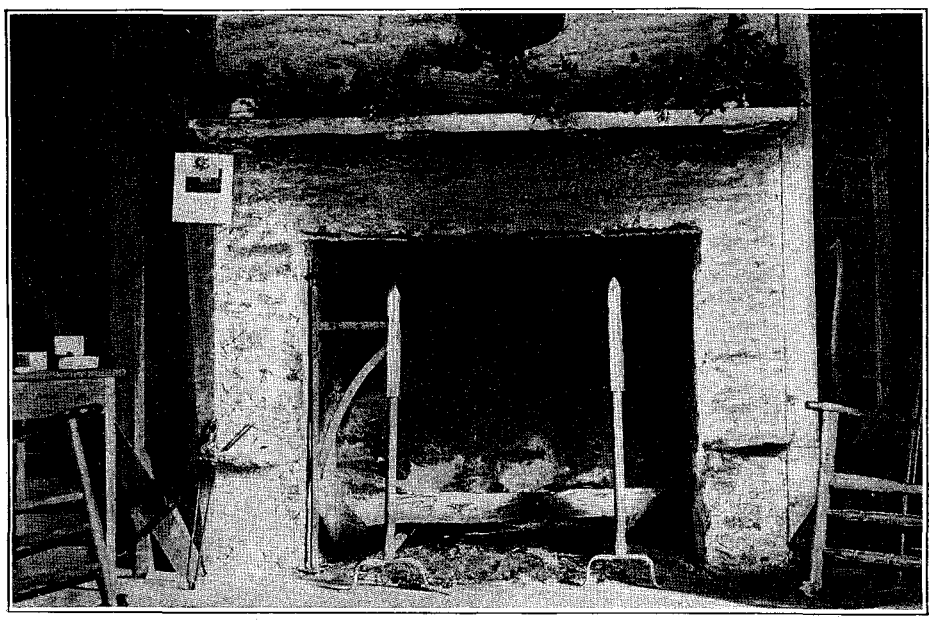
Dealing many birds nest within a stone's throw of the rambling attractive house, with its numerous outbuildings, old garden, orchard, and venerable locusts and catalpas. Among them were Baltimore and orchard orioles, purple grackles, flickers and red-headed woodpeckers, blue-birds, robins, king-birds and indigo buntings. One observation which I made was of real interest. On May 18, 1907, I saw a small party of a dozen or so passenger pigeons, birds I had not seen for a quarter of a century and never expected to see again. I saw them two or three times flying hither and thither with great rapidity, and once they perched in a tall dead pine on the edge of an old field. They were unmistakable; yet the sight was so unexpected that I almost doubted my eyes, and I welcomed a bit of corroborative evidence coming from Dick, the colored foreman at Plain Dealing. Dick is a frequent companion of mine in rambles around the country, and he is an unusually close and accurate observer of birds, and of wild things generally. Dick had mentioned to me having seen some "wild carrier pigeons," as he called them; and, thinking over this remark of his, after I had returned to Washington, I began to wonder whether he too might not have seen passenger pigeons. Accordingly I wrote to Mr. Wilmer, asking him to question Dick and find out what the "carrier pigeons" looked like. His answering letter runs in part as follows:

"On May 12th last Dick saw a flock of about thirty wild pigeons, followed at a short distance by about half as many, flying in a circle very rapidly, between the Plain Dealing house and the woods, where they disappeared. They had pointed tails and resembled somewhat large doves—the breast and sides rather a brownish red. He had seen them before, but many years ago. I think it is unquestionably the passenger pigeon—*ectopistes migratoria*—described on page 25 of the 5th volume of Audubon. I remember the pigeon roosts as he describes them, on a smaller scale, but large flocks have not been seen in this part of Virginia for many years."

The house at Pine Knot consists of one long room, with a broad piazza, below, and three small bedrooms above. It is made of wood, with big outside chimneys at each end. Wood rats and white-footed mice visit it; once a weasel came in after them; now a flying squirrel has made his home among the rafters. On one side the pines and on the other side the oaks come up to



The fire-place.

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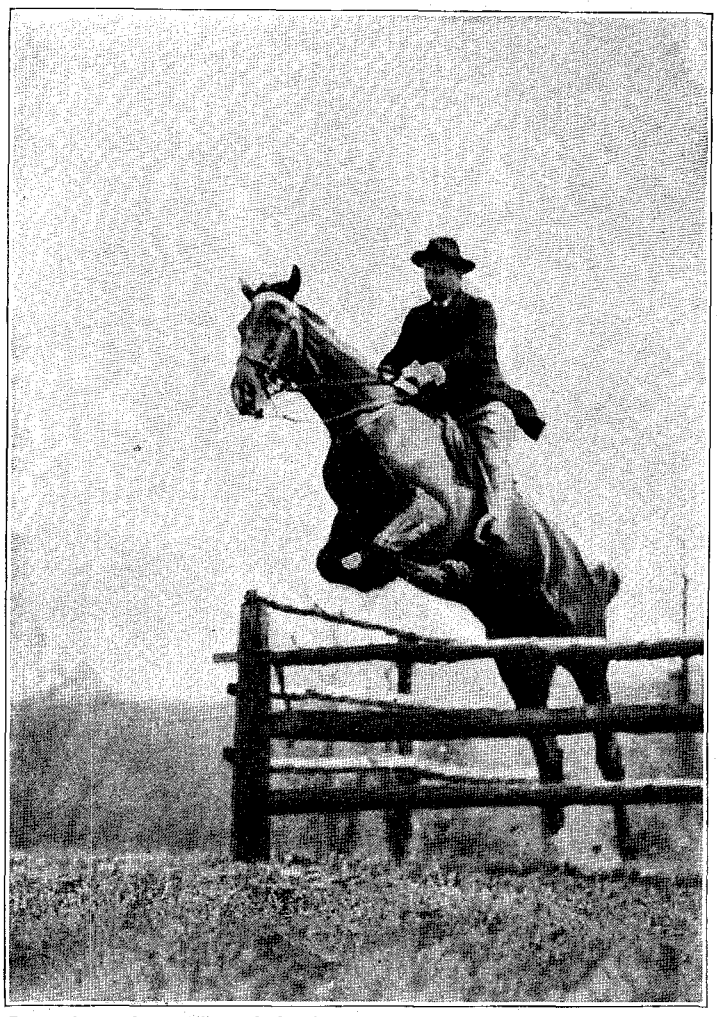

From a photograph, copyright 1907, by Clinedinst

"Roswell behaves like a gentleman"

the walls; in front the broom sedge grows almost to the piazza and above the line of its waving plumes we look across the beautiful rolling Virginia farm country to the foothills of the Blue Ridge. At night whip-poor-wills call incessantly around us. In the late spring or early summer we usually take breakfast and dinner on the veranda, listening to mocking-bird, cardinal, and Carolina wren, as well as to many more common singers. In the winter the little house can only be kept warm by roaring fires in the great open fireplaces, for there is no plaster on the walls, nothing but the bare wood. Then the table is set near the blazing logs at one end of the long room which makes up the lower part of the house, and at the other end the colored cook—Jim Crack by name—prepares the delicious Virginia dinner; while around him cluster the little darkies, who go on errands, bring in wood, or fetch water from the spring, to put in the bucket which stands below where the gourd hangs on the wall. Outside the wind moans or the still cold bites if the night is quiet; but inside there is warmth and light and cheer.

There are plenty of quail and rabbits in the fields and woods near by, so we live partly on what our guns bring in; and there are also wild turkeys. I spent the first three days of November, 1906, in a finally successful effort to kill a wild turkey. Each morning I left the house between three and

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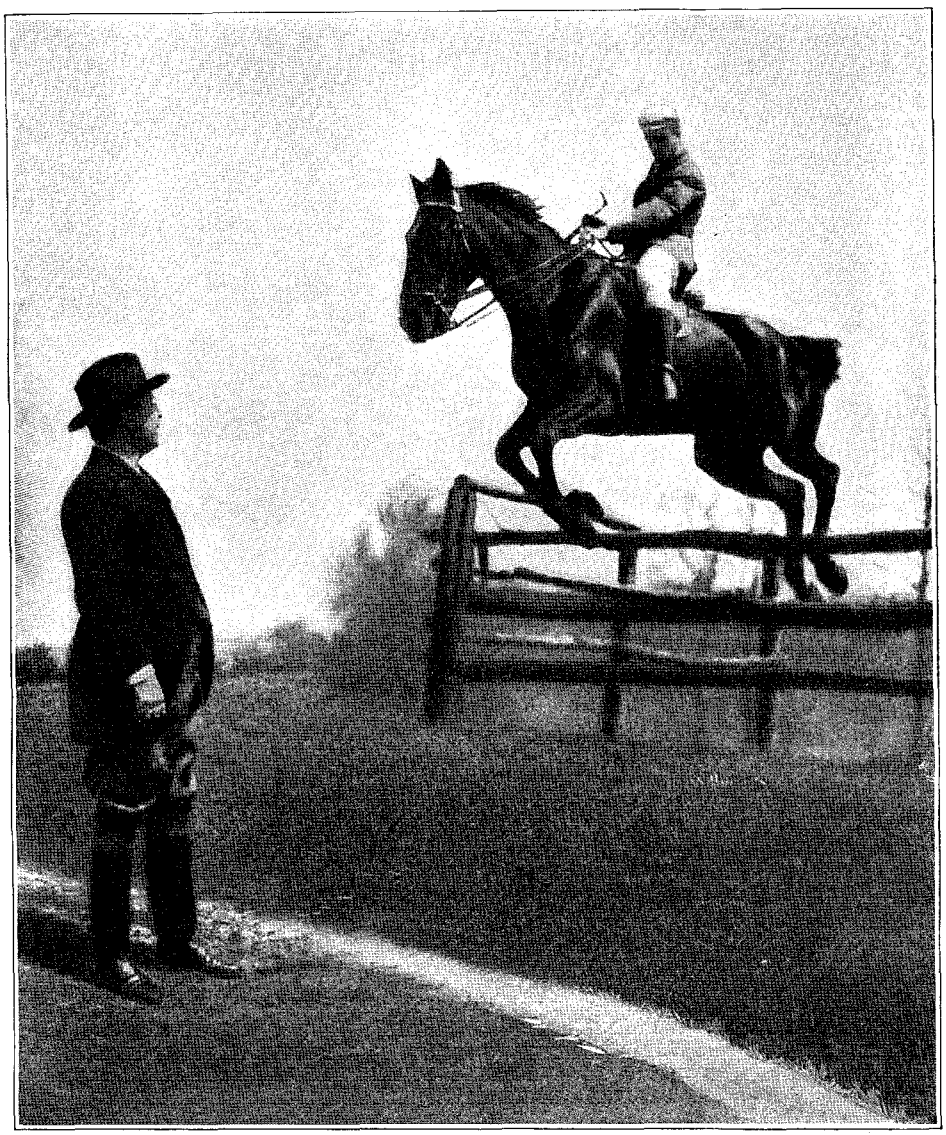
five o'clock, under a cold, brilliant moon. The frost was heavy; and my horse shuffled over the frozen ruts as I rode after Dick. I was on the turkey grounds before the faintest streak of dawn had appeared in the East; and I worked as long as daylight lasted. It was interesting and attractive in spite of the cold. In the night we heard the quavering screech owls; and occasionally the hooting of one of their bigger brothers. At dawn we listened to the lusty hammering of the big logcocks, or to the curious coughing or croaking sound of a hawk before it left its roost. Now and then loose flocks of small birds straggled by us, as we sat in the blinds, or rested to eat our lunch; chickadees, tufted tits, golden crested kinglets, creepers, cardinals, various sparrows and small woodpeckers. Once we saw a shrike pounce on a field mouse by a haystack; once we came on a ruffled grouse sitting motionless in the road.

The last day I had with me Jim Bishop, a man who had hunted turkeys by pro-



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Audrey takes the bars.

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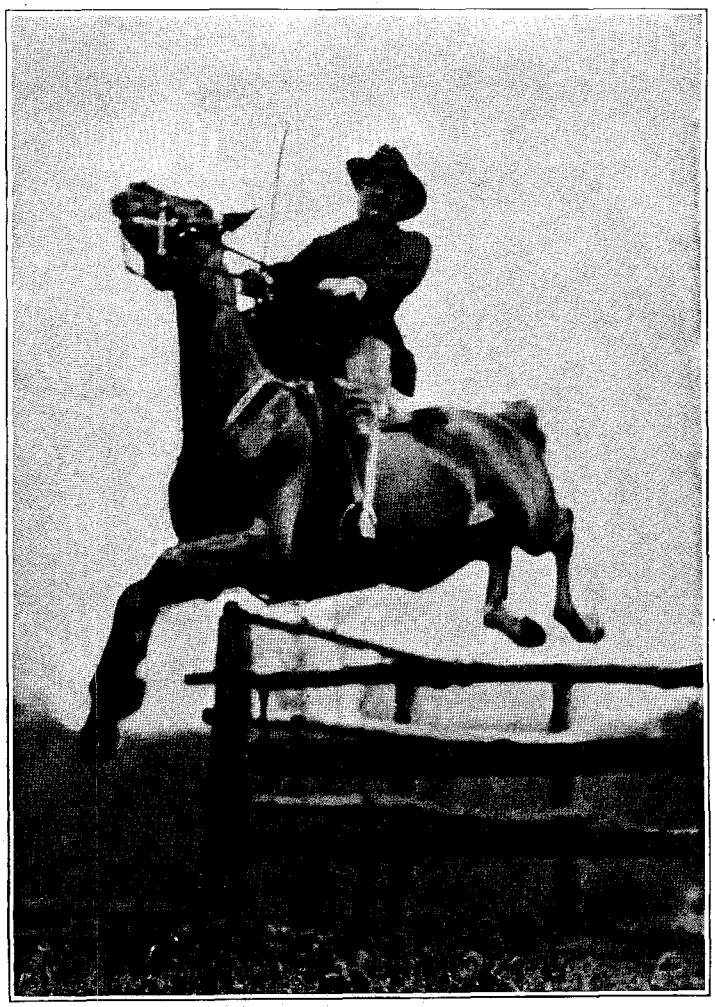
fession, a hard-working farmer, whose ancestors have for generations been farmers and woodsmen; an excellent hunter, tireless, resourceful, with an eye that nothing escaped; just the kind of man one likes to regard as typical of what is best in American life. Until this day, and indeed until the very end of this day, chance did not favor us. We tried to get up to the turkeys on the roosts before daybreak; but they roosted in pines, and, night though it was, they were evidently on the lookout, for they always saw us long before we could make them out, and then we could hear them fly out of the tree-tops. Turkeys are quite as wary as deer, and we never got a sight of them while we were walking through the woods; but two or three times we flushed gangs, and my companion then at once built a little blind of pine boughs, in which we sat while he tried to call the scattered birds up to us by imitating, with marvellous fidelity, their yelping. Twice a turkey started toward us, but on each occasion the old hen began calling some distance off and all the scattered birds at once went toward her. At other times I would slip around to one side of a wood while my companion walked through it; but either there were no turkeys or they went out somewhere far away from us.

On the last day I was out thirteen hours. Finally, late in the afternoon, Jim Bishop marked a turkey into a point of pines which



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Roswell fights for his head.

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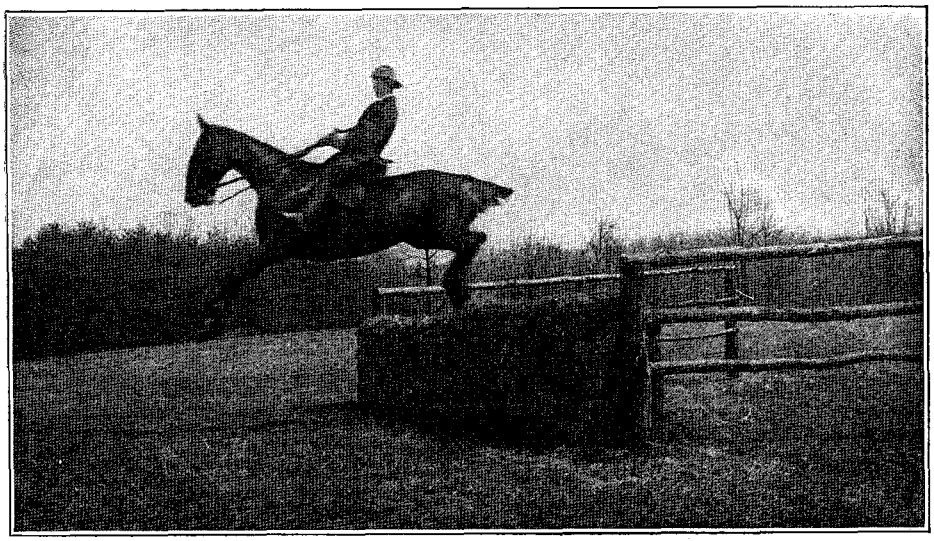

The stone wall.

stretched from a line of wooded hills down into a narrow open valley on the other side of which again rose wooded hills. I ran down to the end of the point and stood behind a small oak, while Bishop and Dick walked down through the trees to drive the turkeys toward me. This time everything went well; the turkey came out of the cover not too far off and sprang into the air, heading across the valley and offering me a side shot at forty yards as he sailed by. It was just the distance for the close-shooting ten-bore duck gun I carried; and at the report down came the turkey in a heap, not so much as a leg, or wing moving. It was an easy shot. But we had hunted hard for three days; and the turkey is the king of American game birds; and besides I knew he would be very good eating indeed when we brought him home; so I was as pleased as possible when Dick lifted the fine young gobbler, his bronze plumage iridescent in the light of the westering sun.

Formerly we could ride across country in any direction around Washington; and almost as soon as we left the beautiful, tree-shaded streets of the city we were in the real country. But as Washington grows, it naturally—and to me most regrettably—becomes less and less like its former, glorified-village, self; and wire fencing has destroyed our old cross-country rides. Fortunately there are now many delightful bridle trails in Rock Creek Park; and we have fixed up a number of good jumps at suitable places—a stone wall, a water jump, a bank with a ditch, two or three post-and-rails, about four feet high, and some stiff brush-hurdles, one of five feet seven inches. The last, which is the only formidable jump, was put up to please two sporting members of the administration, Bacon and Meyer. Both of them school their horses over it; and my two elder boys, and Fitzhugh Lee, my cavalry aide, also school my horses over it. On one of my horses, Roswell, I have gone over it myself; and as I weigh two hundred pounds without my saddle I think that the jump, with such a weight, in cold blood, should be credited to Roswell for righteousness. Roswell is a bay gelding; Audrey a black mare; they are Virginia horses. In the spring of 1907 I had photographs taken of them going over the various jumps. Roswell is a fine jumper, and usually goes at his jumps in a spirit of matter-of-fact enjoyment. But he now and then shows queer kinks in his temper. On one of these occasions he began by wishing to rush his jumps, and by trying to go over the wings instead of the jumps themselves. He fought hard for his head; and as it happened that the best picture we got of him in the air was at this particular time, it gives a wrong idea of his ordinary behavior, and also, I sincerely trust, a wrong idea of my hands. Generally he takes his jumps like a gentleman.

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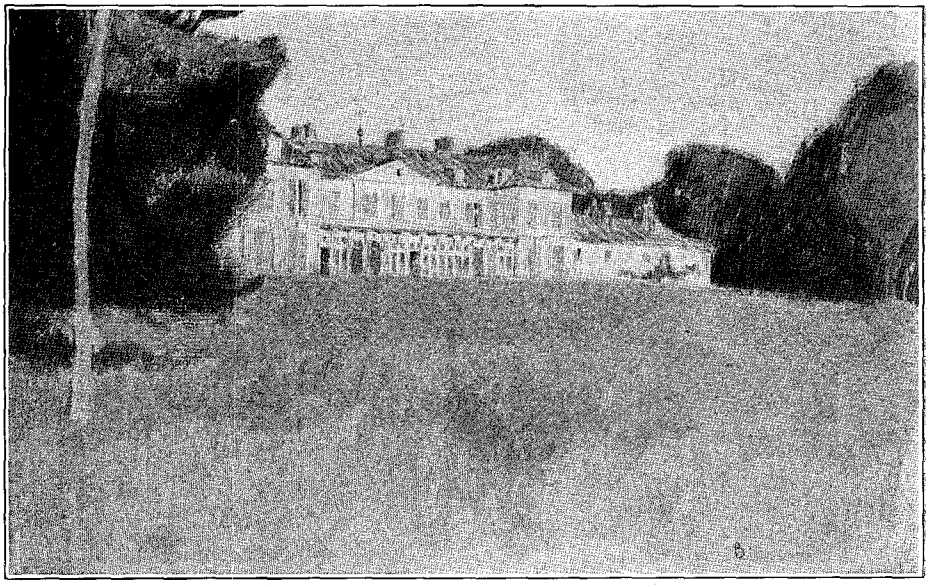

A fine old château.

CHÂTEAU AND COUNTRY LIFE IN FRANCE

By Mary King Waddington

ILLUSTRATIONS BY E. L. BLUMENSCHEIN

FIRST PAPER

MY first experience of country life in France, about thirty years ago, was in a fine old château standing high in pretty, undulating, wooded country close to the forest of Villers-Cotterets, and overlooking the great plains of the Oise—big green fields stretching away to the sky-line, broken occasionally by little clumps of wood, with steeples rising out of the green, marking the villages and hamlets which, at intervals, are scattered over the plains, and in the distance the blue line of the forest. The château was a long, perfectly simple, white stone building. When I first saw it, one bright November afternoon, I said to my husband as we drove up, "What a charming old wooden house!" which remark so astonished him that he could hardly explain that it was all stone, and that no big houses (nor small, either) in France were built of wood. I, having been born in a large white wooden house in America, couldn't understand why he was so horrified at my ignorance of French architecture. It was a fine old house, high in the centre, with a lower wing on each side. There were three drawing-rooms, a library, billiard-room, and dining-room on the ground-floor. The large drawing-room, where we always sat, ran straight through the house, with big glass doors opening out on the lawn on the entrance side, and on the other into a long gallery which ran almost the whole length of the house. It was always filled with plants and flowers, open in summer, with awnings to keep out the sun; shut in winter with glass windows, and warmed by one of the three *calorifères* of the house. In front of the gallery the lawn sloped down to the wall, which separated the place from the highroad. A belt of fine trees marked the path along the wall and shut out the road completely, ex-

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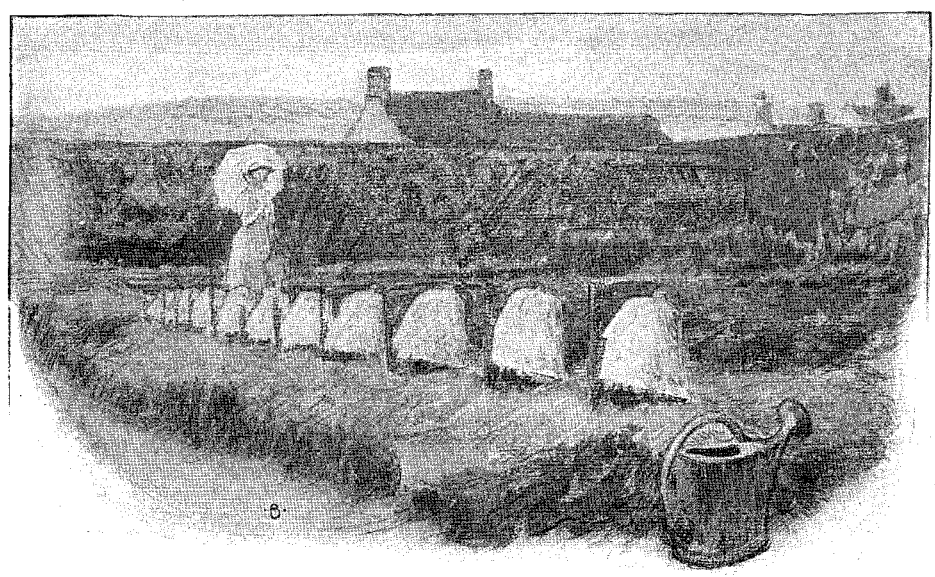
cept in certain places where an opening had been made for the view.

We were a small party for such a big house: only the proprietor and his wife (old people), my husband and myself. The life was very simple, almost austere. The old people lived in the centre of the château, W. and I in one of the wings. It had been all fitted up for us, and was a charming little house. W. had the ground-floor—a bedroom, dressing-room, *cabinet de travail*, dining-room, and a small room, half reception-room, half library, where he had a large bookcase filled with books, which he gave away as prizes, or to school libraries. The choice of the books always interested me. They were principally translations, English and American—Walter Scott, Marryat, Fenimore Cooper, etc. The bedroom and *cabinet de travail* had glass doors opening on the park. I had the same rooms upstairs, giving one to my maid, for I was nervous at being so far away from anyone. M. and Mme. A. and all the servants were at the other end of the house, and there were no bells in our wing (nor anywhere else in the house except in the dining-room). When I wanted a work-woman who was sewing in the *lingerie* I had to go up a steep little winding staircase which connected our wing with the main building, and walk the whole length of the gallery to the *lingerie*, which was at the extreme end of the other wing. I was very fond of my rooms. The bedroom and sitting-room opened on a balcony with a lovely view over wood and park. When I sat there in the morning with my *petit déjeuner*—cup of tea and roll—I could see all that went on in the place. First the keeper would appear, a tall, handsome man, rather the northern type, with fair hair and blue eyes, his gun always over his shoulder, *sacoche* at his side, swinging along with the free, vigorous step of a man accustomed to walk all day. Then Hubert, the coachman, would come for orders, two little fox-terriers always accompanying him, playing and barking, and rolling about on the grass. Then the farmer's wife, driving herself in her gig, and bringing cheese, butter, milk, and sometimes chickens when our *basse-cour* was getting low. A little later another lot would appear, people from the village or canton, wanting to see their deputy and have all manner of grievances redressed. It was curious sometimes to make out, at the end of a long story, told in peasant dialect, with many digressions, what particular service *notre député* was expected to render. I was present sometimes at some of the conversations, and was astounded at W.'s patience and comprehension of what was wanted—I never understood half.

We generally had our day to ourselves



I used to walk about the park and gardens.—Page 398.

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We rode almost every morning—long, delicious gallops in the woods, the horses going easily and lightly over the grass roads; and the days W. was away and couldn't ride, I used to walk about the park and gardens. The kitchen garden was enormous—almost a park in itself—and in the season I eat pounds of white grapes, which ripened to a fine gold color on the walls in the sun. We rarely saw M. and Mme. A. until twelve-o'clock breakfast.

Sometimes when it was fine we would take a walk with the old people after breakfast, but we generally spent our days apart. M. and Mme. A. were charming people, intelligent, cultivated, reading everything and keeping quite in touch with all the literary and Protestant world, but they had lived for years entirely in the country, seeing few people, and living for each other. The first evenings at the château made a great impression upon me. We dined at 7:30, and always sat after dinner in the big drawing-room. There was one lamp on a round table in the middle of the room (all the corners shrouded in darkness). M. and Mme. A. sat in two arm-chairs opposite to each other, Mme. A. with a green shade in front of her. Her eyes were very bad; she could neither read nor work. She had been a beautiful musician, and still played occasionally, by heart, the classics. I loved to hear her play Beethoven and Handel, such a delicate, old-fashioned touch. Music was at once a bond of union. I often sang for her, and she liked everything I sang—Italian *starnelli*, old-fashioned American negro songs, and even the very light modern French *chansonnette*, when there was any melody in them. There were two other arm-

I loved to hear her play Beethoven and Handel.

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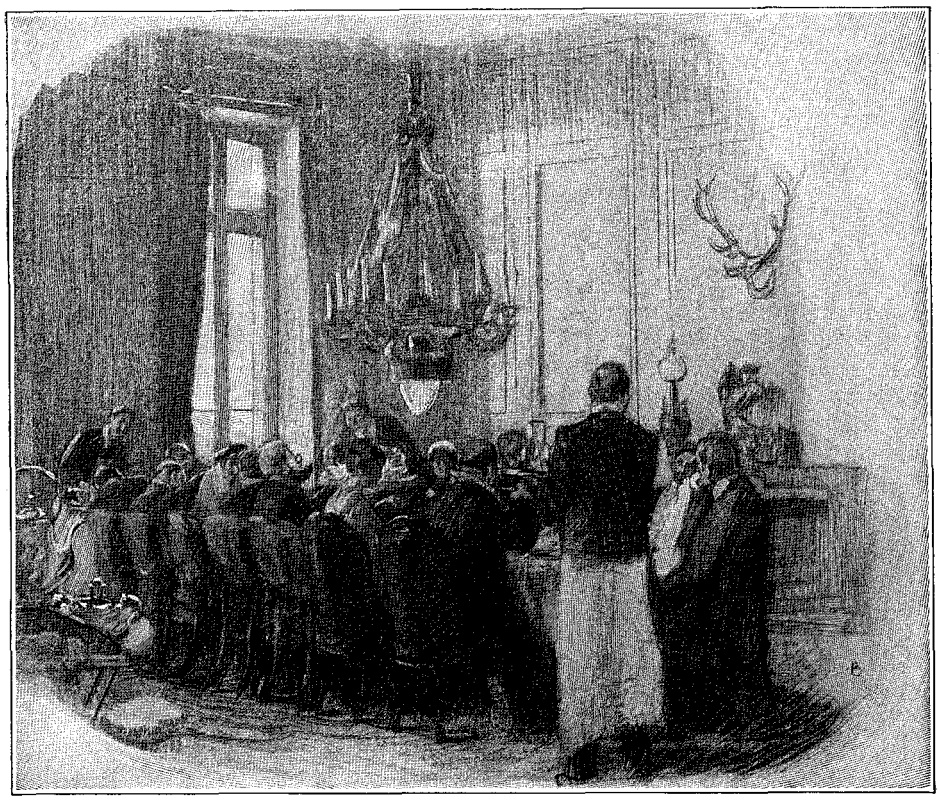

There were all sorts and kinds.—Page 405.

chairs at the table, destined for W. and me. I will say W. never occupied his. He would sit for about half an hour with M. A. and talk politics or local matters with him, but after that he departed to his own quarters, and I remained with the old people. I felt very strange at first, it was so unlike anything I had ever seen, so different from my home life, where we were a happy, noisy family party—someone (two generally) always at the piano, everybody laughing, talking, and enjoying life, and always a troop of visitors, cousins innumerable and friends.

It was a curious atmosphere. I can't say dull exactly, for both M. and Mme. A. were clever, and the discussions over books, politics, and life generally, were interesting, but it was serious, no vitality, nothing gay, no power of enjoyment. They had had a great grief in their lives in the loss of an only daughter, which had left permanent traces. They were very kind and did their best to make me feel at home, and after the first few evenings I didn't mind. M. A. had always been in the habit of reading aloud to his wife for an hour every evening after dinner—the paper, an article in one of the reviews, anything she liked. I liked that, too, and as I felt more at home used to discuss everything with M. A. He was quite horrified one evening when I said I didn't like Molière, didn't believe anybody did (particularly foreigners), unless they had been brought up to it. It really rather worried him. He proposed to read aloud part of the principal plays, which he chose very carefully, and ended by making a regular *cours de Molière*. He read charmingly, with much spirit, bringing out every touch of humor and fancy, and I was obliged to say I found it most interesting. We read all sorts of things beside Molière—Lundis de Ste.-Beuve, Chateaubriand, some splendid pages on the French Revolution, Taine, Guizot, Mme. de Staël, Lamartine, etc., and sometimes rather light memoirs of the Régence and the light ladies of the eighteenth century, who apparently mixed up politics,

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religion, literature, and lovers in the most simple style. These last readings he always prepared beforehand, and I was often surprised at sudden transitions and unfinished conversations which meant that he had suppressed certain passages which he judged too improper for general reading.

He read, one evening, a charming *feuilleton* of George Sand. It began: "Le Baron avait causé politique toute la soirée," which conversation apparently so exasperated the baronne and a young cousin that they wandered out into the village, which they immediately set by the ears. The cousin was an excellent mimic of all animals' noises. He barked so loud and so viciously that he started all the dogs in the village, who went nearly mad with excitement, and frightened the inhabitants out of their wits. Every window was opened, the *curé*, the *garde champêtre*, the schoolmaster, all peering out anxiously into the night, and asking what was happening. Was it tramps, or a travelling circus, or a bear escaped from his showman, or perhaps a wolf? I have wished sometimes since, when I have heard various barons talking politics, that I, too, could wander out into the night and seek distraction outside.

"Monsieur A."

It was a serious life in the big château. There was no railway anywhere near, and very little traffic on the highroad. After nightfall a mantle of silence seemed to settle on the house and park—that absolute silence of great spaces where you almost hear your own heart beat. W. went to Paris occasionally, and usually came back by the last train, getting to the château at midnight. I always waited for him upstairs in my little *salon*, and the silence was so oppressive that the most ordinary noise—a branch blowing across a window-pane, or a piece of charred wood falling on the hearth—sounded like a cannon shot echoing through the long corridor. It was a relief when I heard the trot of his big mare at the top of the hill, quite fifteen minutes before he turned into the park gates. He has often told me how long and still the evenings and nights were during the Franco-Prussian War. He remained at the château all through the war with the old people. After Sedan almost the whole Prussian army passed the château on their way to Versailles and Paris. The big white house was seen from a long distance, so, as soon as it was dark, all the wooden shutters on the side of the highroad were shut, heavy curtains drawn, and strict orders given to have as little light as possible. He was sitting in his library one evening about dusk, waiting for the man to bring his lamp and shut the shutters, having had a trying day with the peasants, who were all frightened and nervous at the approach of the Germans. He was quite absorbed in rather melancholy reflections when he suddenly felt that someone was looking in at the window (the library was on the ground-floor with doors and windows opening on the park). He rose quickly, going to the window, as he thought someone in the village wanted to speak to him, and was confronted by a *Pickelhaube* and a round German face flattened against the window-pane. He opened the window at once, and the man poured forth a torrent of German, which W. fortunately understood. While he was talking W. saw forms, their muskets and helmets showing out quite distinctly in the half-light, crossing the lawn and coming up some of the broad paths. It was a disagreeable sight, which he was destined to see many times.

It was wonderful what exact information the Germans had. They knew all the roads, all the villages and little hamlets, the big châteaux, and most of the small mills and farms. There were still traces of the German occupation when I went to that part of the country; on some of the walls and houses marks in red paint—"4 *Pferde*, 12 *Männer*." They always wanted food and lodging, which they usually (not always) paid for. Wherever they found horses they took them, but M. A. and W. had sent all theirs away except one saddle-horse,

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which lived in a stable, in the woods near the house. In Normandy, near Rouen, at my brother-in-law's place, they had German officers and soldiers quartered for a long time. They instantly took possession of horses and carriages, and my sister-in-law, toiling up a steep hill, would be passed by her own carriage and horses filled with German officers. However, on the whole, W. said, the Germans, as a victorious invading army, behaved well (much better than the French would have done under similar circumstances), the officers always perfectly polite, and keeping their men in good order. They had all sorts and kinds at the château. They rarely remained long—used to appear at the gate in small bands of four or five, with a *sous-officier*, who always asked to see either the proprietor or someone in authority. He said how many men and horses he wanted lodged and fed, and announced the arrival, a little later, of several officers to dine and sleep. They were always received by M. A. or W., and the same conversation took place every time. They were told the servant would show them their rooms, and the dinner would be served at any hour they wished. They replied that they would have the honor of waiting upon

Peasant women.

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the ladies of the family as soon as they made a little *toilette* and removed the dust of the route, and that they would be very happy to dine with the family at their habitual hour. They were then told that the ladies didn't receive, and that the family dined alone. They were always annoyed at that answer. As a rule they behaved well, but occasionally there would be some rough specimens among the officers.

W. was coming home one day from his usual round just before nightfall, when he heard loud voices and a great commotion in the hall—M. A. and one or two German officers. The old man very quiet and dignified, the Germans most insulting, with threats of taking him off to prison. W. interfered at once, and learned from the irate officers what was the cause of the quarrel.

"Madame A."

They had asked for champagne (with the usual idea of foreigners that champagne flowed through all French châteaux, and M. A. had said there was none in the house. They knew better, as some of their men had seen champagne bottles in the cellar. W. said there was certainly a mistake—there was none in the house. They again became most insolent and threatening—said they would take them both to prison. W. suggested, wouldn't it be better to go down the cellar with him? Then they could see for themselves there was none. Accordingly they all adjourned to the cellar and W. saw at once what had misled them—a quantity of bottles of eau de Seidlitz, rather like champagne bottles in shape. They pointed triumphantly to these and asked what he meant by saying there was no champagne, and told their men to carry off the bottles. W. said again it was not champagne—he didn't believe they would like it. They were quite sure they had found a prize, and all took copious draughts of the water—with disastrous results, as they heard afterward from the servants.

Later, during the armistice and Prussian occupation, there were soldiers quartered all around the château, and, of course, there were many distressing scenes. All our little village of Louvry, near our farm, had taken itself off to the woods. They were quite safe there, as the Prussians never came into the woods on account of the sharp-shooters. W. said their camp was comfortable enough—they had all their household utensils, beds, blankets, donkeys, and goats, and could make fires in the clearing in the middle of the woods. They were mostly women and children, only a very few old men and young boys left. The poor things were terrified by the Germans and Bismarck, of whom they had made themselves an extraordinary picture. "Monsieur sait que Bismarck tue tous les enfants pour qu'il n'y ait plus de Français." (Monsieur knows that Bismarck kills all the children so that there shall be no more French.) The boys kept W. in a fever. They had got some old guns, and were always hovering about on the edge of the wood, trying to have a shot at a German. He was very uncomfortable himself at one time during the armistice, for he was sending off parties of recruits to join one of the big *corps d'armée* in the neighborhood, and they all passed at the château to get their money and *feuille de route*, which was signed by him. He sent them off in small bands of four or five, always through the woods, with a line to various keepers and farmers along the route, who could be trusted, and would help them to get on and find their way. Of course, if anyone of them had been taken with W.'s signature and recommendation on him, the Germans would have made short work of W., which he was quite aware of; so every night for weeks his big black Irish horse Paddy was saddled and tied to a certain tree in one of the narrow alleys of the big park—the branches so thick and low that it was difficult to pass in broad daylight, and at night impossible, except for him who knew every inch of the ground. With five minutes' start, if the alarm had

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Drawn by E. L. Blumenschein.

A country wedding.—Page 407.

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Ferdinand.—Page 409.

been given, he could have got away into his own woods, where he knew no one would follow him.

Hubert, the old coachman, used often to talk to me about all that troubled time. When the weather was dark and stormy he used to stay himself half the night, starting at every sound, and there are so many sounds in the woods at night, all sorts of wild birds and little animals that one never hears in the daytime—sometimes a rabbit would dart out of a hole and whisk round a corner; sometimes a bog *buse* (sort of eagle) fly out of a tree with great flapping of wings; occasionally a wild-cat with bright-green eyes would come stealthily along and then make a flying leap over the bushes. His nerves were so unstrung that every noise seemed a danger, and he had visions of Germans lying in ambush in the woods, waiting to pounce upon W. if he should appear. He said Paddy was so wise, seemed to know that he must be perfectly quiet, never kicked nor snorted.

It was impossible to realize those dreadful days when we were riding and walk-

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ing in the woods, so enchanting in the early summer, with thousands of lilies of the valley and periwinkles growing wild, and a beautiful blue flower, a sort of orchid. We used to turn all the village children into the woods, and they picked enormous bunches of lilies, which stood all over the château in big china bowls. I loved the wood life at all seasons. I often made the round with W. and his keepers in the autumn when he was preparing a *battue*. The men were very keen about the game, knew the tracks of all the animals, showing me the long narrow rabbit tracks, running a long distance toward the quarries which were full of rabbit holes, and the little delicate hoof-marks of the *chevreuil* (roe-deer) just where he had jumped across the road. The wild boar was easy to trace—little twigs broken, and ferns and leaves quite crushed, where he had passed. The wild boars and stags never stayed very long in our woods—went through merely to the great forest of Villers-Cotterets—so it was most important to know the exact moment of their passage, and there was great pride and excitement when one was taken.

Another interesting moment was when the *coupe de l'année* was being made. Parts of the woods were cut down regularly every year, certain squares marked off. The first day's work was the marking of the big trees along the alleys which were to remain—a broad red ring around the trunks being very conspicuous. Then came the thinning of the trees, cutting off the top branches, and that was really a curious sight. The men climbed high into the tree, and then hung on to the trunk with iron clamps on their feet, with points which stuck into the bark, and apparently gave them a perfectly secure hold, but it looked dangerous to see them swinging off from the trunk with a sort of axe in their hands, cutting off the branches with a swift, sharp stroke. When they finally attacked the big trees that were to come down it was a much longer affair, and they made slow progress. They knew their work well, the exact moment when the last blow had been given, and they must spring aside to get out of the way when the tree fell with a great crash.

There were usually two or three big *battues* in November for the neighboring farmers and small proprietors. The breakfast always took place at the keeper's house. We had arranged one room as a dining-room, and the keeper's wife was a very good cook; her *omelette au lard* and *civet de lièvre*, classic dishes for a shooting breakfast, were excellent. The repast always ended with a *galette aux amandes* made by the *chef* of the château. I generally went down to the kennels at the end of the day, and it was a pretty sight when the party emerged from the woods, first the shooters, then a regiment of *rebatteurs* (men who track the game), the game cart with a donkey bringing up the rear—the big game, *chevreuil* or boar, at the bottom of the cart, the hares and rabbits hanging from the sides. The sportsmen all came back to the keeper's lodge to have a drink before starting off on their long drive home, and there was always a great discussion over the entries in the game book and the number of *pièces* each man had killed. It was a very difficult account to make, as every man counted many more rabbits than the trackers had found, so they were obliged to make an average of the game that had been brought in. When all the guests had departed, it was killing to hear the old keeper's criticisms.

Another important function was a large breakfast to all the mayors, *conseillers d'arrondissement*, and rich farmers of W.'s canton. That always took place at the château, and Mme. A. and I appeared at table. There were all sorts and kinds—some men in dress coats and white gloves, some very rough specimens in corduroys and thick-nailed shoes, having begun life as *garçons de ferme* (ploughboys). They were all intelligent, well up in politics, and expressed themselves very well, but I think, on the whole, they were pleased when Mme. A. and I withdrew and they went into the gallery for their coffee and cigars. Mme. A. was extraordinarily easy—talked to them all. They came in exactly the same sort of equipage, a light, high, two-wheeled trap with a hood, except the Mayor of La Ferté, our big town, who came in his victoria.

I went often with W. to some of the big farms to see the sheep-shearing and the dairies, and cheese made. The farmer's wife in France is a very capable, hard-working woman—up early, seeing to everything herself, and ruling all her carters and ploughboys with a heavy hand. Once a week, on market day, she takes her cheeses to the market town, driving herself in her

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high gig, and several times I have seen some of them coming home with a cow tied to their wagon behind, which they had bought at the market. They were always pleased to see us, delighted to show anything we wanted to see, offered us refreshment—bread and cheese, milk and wine—but never came to see me at the château. I made the round of all the châteaux with Mme. A. to make acquaintance with the neighbors. They were all rather far off, and we rarely found anyone at home. I loved the long drives, almost always through the forest, which was quite beautiful in all seasons, changing like the sea. It was delightful in midsummer, the branches of the big trees almost meeting over our heads, making a perfect shade, and the long, straight green alleys stretching away before us, as far as we could see. When the wood was a little less thick, the afternoon sun would make long zigzags of light through the trees and trace curious patterns upon the hard white road when we emerged occasionally for a few minutes from the depths of the forest at a cross-road. It was perfectly still, but summer stillness, when one hears the buzzing and fluttering wings of small birds and insects and is conscious of life around one.

The most beautiful time for the forest is, of course, in the autumn. October and November are lovely months, with the changing foliage, the red and yellow almost as vivid as in America, and always a foreground of moss and brown ferns, which grow very thick and high all through the forest. We used to drive sometimes over a thick carpet of red and yellow leaves, hardly hearing the horses' hoofs or the noise of the wheels, and when we turned our faces homeward toward the sunset there was really a glory of color in wood and sky. It was always curiously lonely—we rarely met anything or anyone, occasionally a group of wood-cutters or boys exercising dogs and horses from the hunting stables of Villers-Cotterets. At long intervals we would come to a keeper's lodge, standing quite alone in the middle of the forest, generally near a *carrefour* where several roads met. There was always a small clearing—garden and kennels, and a perfectly comfortable house, but it must be a lonely life for the women when their husbands are off all day on their rounds. I asked one of them once, a pretty, smiling young woman who always came out when the carriage passed, with three or four children hanging to her skirts, if she was never afraid, being alone with small children and no possibility of help, if any drunkards or evilly disposed men came along. She said no—that tramps and vagabonds never came into the heart of the forest, and always kept clear of the keeper's house, as they never knew where he and his gun might be. She said she had had one awful night with a sick child. She was alone in the house with two other small children, almost babies, while her husband had to walk several miles to get a doctor. The long wait was terrible. I got to know all the keepers' wives on our side of the forest quite well, and it was always a great interest to them when we passed on horseback, so few women rode in that part of France in those days.

Sometimes, when we were in the heart of the forest, a big stag with wide-spreading antlers would bound across the road; sometimes a pretty roebuck would come to the edge of the wood and gallop quickly back as we got near.

We had a nice couple at the lodge, an old cavalry soldier who had been for years coachman at the château and who had married a Scotchwoman, nurse of one of the children. It was curious to see the tall, gaunt figure of the Scotchwoman, always dressed in a short linsey skirt, loose jacket, and white cap, in the midst of the chattering, excitable women of the village. She looked so unlike them. Our peasant women wear, too, a short thick skirt, loose jacket, and worsted or knit stockings, but they all wear *sabots* and on their heads a turban made of bright-colored cotton; the older women, of course—the girls wear nothing on their heads. They become bent and wrinkled very soon—old women before their time—having worked always in the fields and carried heavy burdens on their backs. She kept much to herself and rarely left the park. But all the women came to her with their troubles. Nearly always the same story—the men spending their earnings on drink and the poor mothers toiling and striving from dawn till dark to give the little ones enough to eat. She was a strict Protestant, very taciturn and reserved, quite the type of the old Calvinist race who fought so hard against the "Scarlet Woman" when the beautiful and unhappy Marie

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Stuart was reigning in Scotland and trying to rule her wild subjects. I often went to see her and she would tell me of her first days at the chateau, where everything was so different from what she was accustomed to.

She didn't tell me what Mme. A. did—that she was a very handsome girl and all the men of the establishment fell in love with her. There were dramas of jealousy when she finally decided to marry the coachman. Our *chef* had learned how to make various English cakes in London, and whenever he made buns or a plum-pudding he used to take some to her. She was a great reader, and we always kept the *Times* for her, and she and I sympathized with each other—two Anglo-Saxons married in France.

Some of the traditions of the château were quite charming. I was sitting in the lodge one day talking to Mme. Antoine, when the baker appeared, with what seemed to me an extraordinary provision of bread. I said, "Does he leave the bread for the whole village with you?" "It is not for me, madame, it is for the *traînards* (tramps) who pass on the road," and she explained that all the chateaux gave a piece of bread and two *sous* to any wayfarer who asked for food. She cut the bread into good thick slices, and showed me a wooden bowl on the chimney, filled with two-*sous* pieces. While I was there two men appeared at the big gates, which were always open in the day. They were strong young fellows carrying their bundles, and a sort of pitchfork slung over their shoulders. They looked weary and footsore, their shoes worn in holes. They asked for something to drink and some tobacco, didn't care very much for the water, which was all that Mme. Antoine had to give them, but thanked her civilly enough for the bread and *sous*.

The park wall was a fine vantage-ground to see all (and that wasn't much) that went on on the highroad. The *diligence* to Meaux passed twice a day, with a fine rattle of old wheels and chains, and cracking of whips. It went down the steep hill well enough, but coming up was quite another affair. All the passengers and the driver got out always, and even then it was difficult to get the heavy, cumbersome vehicle up the hill, in winter particularly, when the roads were muddy and slippery. The driver knew us all well, and was much interested in all that went on at the château. He often brought parcels, and occasionally people from the village who wanted to see W.—sometimes a blind piano-tuner who came from Villers-Cotterets. He was very kind to the poor blind man, helped him down most carefully from the diligence, and always brought him through the park gates to the lodge, where he delivered him over to Antoine. It was curious to see the blind man at work. Once he had been led through the rooms, he was quite at home, found the pianos, fussed over the keys and the strings, exactly as if he saw everything. He tuned all the pianos in the country, and was much pleased to put his hands on one that wasn't fifty years old. I had brought down my new Erard.

Sometimes a country wedding passed, and that was always a pretty sight. A marriage is always an important affair in France in every class of life. There are long discussions with all the members of the two families. The *curé*, the notary, the *patron* (if the young man is a workman), are all consulted, and there are as many negotiations and agreements in the most humble families as in the *grand monde* of the Faubourg St. Germain. Almost all French parents give a *dot* of some kind to their children, and whatever the sum is, either five hundred francs or two thousand, it is always scrupulously paid over to the notary. The wedding-day is a long one. After the religious ceremony in the church, all the wedding party—members of the two families and a certain number of friends—adjourn to the hotel of the little town for a breakfast, which is long and most abundant. Then comes the crowning glory of the day—a country walk along the dusty highroad to some wood or meadow where they can spend the whole afternoon. It is pretty to see the little procession trudging along—the bride in all her wedding garments, white dress, white shoes, wreath, and veil; the groom in a dress coat, top-hat, white cravat and waistcoat, with a white ribbon bow on his sleeve. Almost all the girls and young women are dressed in white or light colors; the mothers and grandmothers (the whole family turns out) in black with flowers in their bonnets. There is usually a fiddler walking ahead making most remarkable sounds on his old cracked instrument, and the younger members of the party take an occasional gallop along the road. They are generally very gay; there is much laughing,

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and, from time to time, a burst of song. It is always a mystery to me how the bride keeps her dress and petticoat so clean, but she does, with that extraordinary knack all Frenchwomen seem to have of holding up their skirts. They passed often under the wall of the château, for a favorite resting-place was in our woods at the entrance of the *allée verte*, where it widens out a little; the moss makes a beautiful soft carpet, and the big trees give perfect shade. We heard sounds of merriment one day when we were passing and we stopped to look on, from behind the bushes, where we couldn't be seen. There was quite a party assembled. The fiddler was playing some sort of country-dance and all the company, except the very old people, were dancing and singing, some of the men indulging in most wonderful steps and capers. The children were playing and running under the trees. One stout man was asleep, stretched out full length on the side of the road. I fancy his *piquette*, as they call the ordinary white wine of the country, had been too much for him. The bride and groom were strolling about a little apart from the others, quite happy and lover-like, his arm around her waist, she blushing and giggling.

The *gendarmes* passed also very regularly. They always stopped and talked, had a drink with Antoine, and gave all the local news—how many *braconniers* (poachers) had been caught, how long they were to stay in prison, how some of the farmers' sheep had disappeared, no one knew how exactly—there were no more robbers. One day two of them passed, dragging a man between them who had evidently been struggling and fighting. His blouse was torn, and there was a great gash on his face. We were wildly excited, of course. They told us he was an old sinner, a poacher who had been in prison various times, but these last days, not contented with setting traps for the rabbits, he had set fire to some of the hay-stacks, and they had been hunting for him for some time. He looked a rough customer, had an ugly scowl on his face. One of the little hamlets near the château, on the canal, was a perfect nest of poachers, and I had continual struggles with the keepers when I gave clothes or blankets to the women and children. They said some of the women were as bad as the men, and that I ought not to encourage them to come up to the house and beg for food and clothing; that they sold all the little jackets and petticoats we gave them to the canal hands (also a bad lot) for brandy. I believe it was true in some cases, but in the middle of winter, with snow on the ground, we were hardly warm in the house with big fires everywhere.

I couldn't send away women with four or five children, all insufficiently clothed and fed, most of them in cotton frocks with an old worn knit shawl around their shoulders, legs and arms bare and chapped, half frozen. Some of them lived in caverns or great holes in the rocks, really like beasts. On the road to La Ferté there was a big hole (there is no other word for it) in the bank where a whole family lived. The man was always in prison for something, and his wife, a tall, gaunt figure, with wild hair and eyes, spent most of her time in the woods teaching her boys to set traps for the game. The *curé* told us that one of the children was ill, and that there was literally nothing in the house, so I took one of my cousins with me, and we climbed up the bank, leaving the carriage with Hubert, the coachman, expostulating seriously below. We came to a rickety old door which practically consisted of two rotten planks nailed together. It was ajar; clouds of black smoke poured out as we opened it, and it was some time before we could see anything. We finally made out a heap of filthy rags in one corner, near a sort of fire made of charred pieces of black peat. Two children, one a boy about twelve years old, was lying on the heap of rags, coughing his heart out. He hardly raised his head when we came in. Another child, a girl, some two years younger, was lying beside him, both of them frightfully thin and white; one saw nothing but great dark eyes in their faces. The mother was crouched on the floor close to the children. She hardly moved at first, and was really a horrifying object when she got up; half savage, scarcely clothed—a short petticoat in holes and a ragged bodice gaping open over her bare skin, no shoes or stockings; big black eyes set deep in her head, and a quantity of unkempt black hair. She looked enormous when she stood up, her head nearly touching the roof. I didn't feel very comfortable, but we were two, and the carriage and Hubert within call. The woman was civil enough when she saw I had not come empty-handed. We took her some soup,

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bread, and milk. The children pounced upon the bread like little wild animals. The mother didn't touch anything while we were there—said she was glad to have the milk for the boy. I never saw human beings living in such utter filth and poverty. A crofter's cottage in Scotland, or an Irish hovel with the pigs and children all living together, was a palace compared to that awful hole. I remonstrated vigorously with W. and the Mayor of La Ferté for allowing people to live in that way, like beasts, upon the high-road, close to a perfectly prosperous country town. However, they were vagrants, couldn't live long anywhere, for when we passed again, some days later, there was no one in the hole. The door had fallen down, there was no smoke coming out, and the neighbors told us the family had suddenly disappeared. The authorities then took up the matter—the holes were filled up, and no one was allowed to live in them. It really was too awful—like the dwellers in caves of primeval days.

We didn't have many visits at the château, though we were so near Paris (only about an hour and a half by the express), but the old people had got accustomed to their quiet life, and visitors would have worried them. Sometimes a Protestant *pasteur* would come down for two days. We had a nice visit once from M. de Pressensé, father of the the present deputy, one of the most charming, cultivated men one could imagine. He talked easily and naturally, using such beautiful language. He was most interesting when he told us about the Commune, and all the horrors of that time in Paris. He was in the Tuileries when the mob sacked and burned the palace; saw the *femmes de la halle* sitting on the brocade and satin sofas, saying, "C'est nous les princesses maintenant"; saw the entrance of the troops from Versailles, and the quantity of innocent people shot who were merely standing looking on at the barricades, having never had a gun in their hands. The only thing I didn't like was his long extempore (to me familiar) prayers at night. I believe it is a habit in some old-fashioned French Protestant families to pray for each member of the family by name. I thought it was bad enough when he prayed for the new *ménage* just beginning their married life (that was us), that they might be spiritually guided to do their best for each other and their respective families; but when he proceeded to *name* some others of the family who had strayed a little from the straight and narrow path, hoping they would be brought to see, by Divine grace, the error of their ways, I was horrified, and could hardly refrain from expressing my opinion to the old people. However, I was learning prudence, and when my opinion and judgment were diametrically opposed to those of my new family (which happened often) I kept them to myself. Sunday was strictly kept. There was no Protestant church anywhere near. We had a service in the morning in M. A.'s library. He read prayers and a short sermon, all the household appearing, as most of the servants were Swiss and Protestants. In the afternoon Mme. A. had all the village children at the château. She had a small organ in one of the rooms in the wing of the dining-room, taught them hymns and read them simple little stories. The *curé* was rather anxious at first, having his little flock under such a dangerous heretic influence, but he very soon realized what an excellent thing it was for the children, and both he and the mothers were much disappointed when anything happened to put off the lesson. They didn't see much of the *curé*. He would pay one formal visit in the course of the year, but there was never any intimacy.

We lived much for ourselves, and for a few months in the year it was a rest and change from Paris, and the busy, agitated life, social and political, that one always led there. I liked the space, too, the great high, empty rooms, with no frivolous little tables and screens or stuff on the walls, no photograph stands nor fancy vases for flowers, no *bibelot* of any kind—large, heavy pieces of furniture which were always found every morning in exactly the same place. Once or twice, in later years, I tried to make a few changes, but it was absolutely useless to contend with a wonderful old servant called Ferdinand, who was over sixty years old, and had been brought up at the château, had always remained there with the various owners, and who knew every nook and corner of the house and everything that was in it. It was years before I succeeded in talking to him. I used to meet him sometimes on the stairs and corridors, always running, and carrying two or three pails and brooms. If he could, he dived into any

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open door when he saw me coming, and apparently never heard me when I spoke, for he never answered. He was a marvellous servant, cleaned the whole house, opened and shut all the windows night and morning (almost work enough for one man), lit the *calorifères*, scrubbed and swept and polished floors from early dawn until ten o'clock, when we left the *salon*. He never lived with the other servants, cooked his own food at his own hours in his room, and his only companion was a large black cat, which always followed him about. He did W.'s service, and W. said that they used always to talk about all sorts of things, but I fancy master and servant were equally reticent and understood each other without many words.

I slipped one day on the very slippery wooden steps leading from W.'s little study to the passage. Baby did the same, and got a nasty fall on the stone flags, so I asked W. if he would ask Ferdinand to put a strip of carpet on the steps (there were only four). W. gave the order, but no carpet appeared. He repeated it rather curtly. The old Ferdinand made no answer, but grumbled to himself over his broom that it was perfectly foolish and useless to put down a piece of carpet, that for sixty years people and children, and babies, had walked down those steps and no one had ever thought of asking for carpets. W. had really rather to apologize and explain that his wife was nervous and unused to such highly polished floors. However, we became great friends afterward, Ferdinand and I, and when he understood how fond I was of the château, he didn't mind my deranging the furniture a little. Two grand pianos were a great trial to him. I think he would have liked to put one on top of the other.

The big library, quite at one end of the house, separated from the drawing-room we always sat in by a second large *salon*, was a delightful, quiet resort when anyone wanted to read or write. There were quantities of books, French, English, and German—the classics in all three languages, and a fine collection of historical memoirs.

A BLUEBIRD'S NEST

By Margaret Sherwood

AS I sat thinking, while the sky was gray, there flashed before me suddenly a picture in vivid color: the soft blue of the Bay of Naples, with white sails far and near, and the lovely contours of shore-line and cliff about Sorrento. The scent of the roses in the garden above the cliff was in my nostrils, the soft, eternal plashing of Mediterranean waters in my ears. What brought the sweetness of that moment back to me so poignantly? I wondered, as I took up my brush again and added a splash of green to my canvas. Here came Helen's voice calling softly:

"Do look at the bluebirds building in the hole in this apple-tree!"

Italy vanished and I saw what really was before me, an orchard of knotted old New England apple-trees, and, flashing across the soft, clouded sky, a pair of vivid wings. A bluebird and his wife were certainly making a home in a hollow limb. Helen tiptoed to me, her finger on her lips, and, sitting together on the grass, we watched them at their work. Now and then there was joyous flight and sudden pursuit into the upper air; and then the lovers were back again, collecting blades of grass and bits of straw, with quick fluttering and soft little chirps.

"They put me to shame," said Helen, and she ran away, soon bringing back the linen cover that she was making for the cushion of the old Windsor chair. She and the birds worked side by side, and some of the long linen ravellings became part of the home in the tree.

All day long, in the golden May weather, there was for us the flash of bright wings against the green, or against the less intense blue of the sky, of which they seemed to form a part. Fascinated, we watched the building of the nest. Were we not building

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our own? This old farmhouse, with apple-trees pressing closely about it and straggling down the southern slope to the brook that flowed toward the west, we had found as birds of passage find the special spot among the twigs that they know for home. Here we had paused with a feeling that we had discovered a refuge too remote for pursuit. Never had an automobile ventured down this rough, fern-bordered road, and the railway station was five miles away. In color the house was like the under side of the apple leaves; branches, fragrant with blossom, reached the low dormer windows; petals, white or rose-tinted, drifted across our threshold. We had inherited it all from an elderly maiden cousin whom I had visited in my boyhood: the sparsely furnished dainty rooms with their cream-tinted walls; the marble-cased fireplace in the parlor where we make crackling fires of dead apple branches on the chilly spring evenings; even Deborah, the maid, who served us noisily and well, forever playing the "pipes of Pan" upon the kitchen floor. Our only and consuming fear was that we should be too happy, and should find that the angry gods envied our lot.

"There are plenty of inconveniences, really," Helen would say consolingly. "The stairs are too steep."

"I keep hitting my head against the ceiling," I would add.

"It's very hard to make Deborah cook more than enough for one maiden lady; you don't want your wife to go hungry, do you?"

"She may have to, for my pictures won't sell," I would say grimly.

"Aunt Malvina may discover us any day," Helen would suggest, "and as she is my legal guardian, maybe she could carry me off." So we tried to cheat the gods with a pretence of flaws in our too perfect lot.

My lady, swinging in a gossamer hammock that hung between two of our trees, suddenly looked up at me one day, idly touching her slippered feet to the green below.

"Do you remember how blue the sky was by the cypress at the top of the cliff where we stood for a minute the day you first came to Villa Altamont?"

Did I remember! Withington had invited me to call with him upon some friends who had a villa just beyond Sorrento, and I had gone unwillingly enough. Now the long white dusty road came back to me; the yellow plaster walls of the villa, the ilex avenue and the sculptured fountain where one tall naiad stood with water dripping over her and maidenhair fern growing about her feet. And I came from out the eternal shadow of those ilexes into the glory of southern sunshine and found her there, my lady of the olive-trees, whom I had not dreamed of finding again, but whom I had resolved to paint as I had seen her, for men to worship.

"Yes, I remember," I said, looking up from my book.

"You speak as if you did not care," she said mournfully.

I looked at her.

"Oh!" said Helen, smiling.

For how could I speak? Hollow words have no power to express the many-sided beauty of that moment. One needs eyes and ears and finger-tips and cheeks that the soft salt breeze with its mingled fragrances can touch in order to apprehend it, for the sun was warm on leaf and flower, and the villa garden stretched to the sea.

"It was three weeks," said Helen softly, "and you came every other day. How Aunt Malvina glared!"

"What made you think of it now?" I asked.

"I don't know," she answered dreamily, looking up at the apple branches, which had always for us a hint of Italy's olives against a deeper sky.

I did, but I said nothing; only, in my heart I blessed the birds, the flashing of whose blue wings had power to bring back a past wherein happiness had seemed great except when measured by the greater happiness of the present.

Our new neighbors seemed to disappear soon after this. I wondered whether I, or the picture I was trying to paint, or Deborah in her pink calico dress had frightened them away. Once or twice I saw them at a distance, but they looked away over their blue shoulders as if interested in anything in the world rather than that hole in the apple-tree. There was loud chirping of robins, cheeping of tiny wrens that were building in the porch, flashing of yellow warblers like sudden rays of sunshine across the green and gray, and now and then the swift, sudden flaming of tanager wings. I watched and waited but the bluebirds never came,

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and at length I broke the news to Helen that they had abandoned the nest. She made no answer, but slipped her hand into mine and drew me toward the tree. Following directions, I looked long and carefully, and saw at last, on a soft brown bed, two pale-blue egss.

"There!" said Helen triumphantly. "The mother bird steals in when you are away. She is afraid of being caught by you as we are by Aunt Malvina, and with less reason!"

"But where do you watch her?"

"From the dormer window of my room; there is just space enough between the blossoms."

Looking at the excited face turned up to mine, I wondered if the mother bluebird put half the hope into that little nest that my lady was putting there.

Presently there were five blue eggs within the nest, and our neighbor grew bolder as she began to sit. Always as she came she would cling at her house door to take a last look at me and see if my character had changed since the last scrutiny, when she had dubiously decided that I was to be trusted. Now and then came her mate, fluttering to the moss-grown, shingled roof of the house, or to a high branch near, and I grew to love the companionship of the beating wings and the feet that came and went, making no noise, nor could I work properly unless I was sure that my two friends were safe and unaffrighted.

"I've been making the salad," said Helen one day as she stood with her hand on my shoulder. "Deborah flatly refuses to do it, saying that she isn't going to begin at her age taking up with popish ways. Oh," with no apparent connection, "do you remember the look of the water that day we were yachting off Sicily?"

"What day?" I asked hypocritically. "There were so many."

"The day you did the poem," said Helen reproachfully.

"I did several that voyage."

"You never told me!" she cried, and her hand dropped from my shoulder. "What were they about?"

"The same subject," I answered as well as I could with the brush between my teeth. As I heard nothing more save the sound of light footsteps on the grass I judged that my lady was satisfied, and I worked on, sailing again, with that soft motion, the Mediterranean waters that stretched in gently undulating color as far as the eye could see. Helen was standing by the railing in her white linen gown and sailor hat, and I leaned forward suddenly to give her a poem I had written about her, full of the love I dared not speak. So vivid was the remembered picture that when I lifted my eyes and saw Helen coming back to me in her pale-blue gown from her visit to the nest I had to pause to think which was the dream lady, which the real one.

"Do *you* remember," I asked, "how you came back with my poem and held it out to me saying, "I am not sure that it is quite clear?"

"You made me betray myself shamelessly," said Helen, blushing after two years. "It was as if I had asked you if you had written it about me."

"How red you got!" I remarked.

"Who wouldn't," she demanded, standing at her full height, "after the way you explained?"

"It was the only honorable thing to do," I maintained.

"And why?" she demanded, coming a step nearer.

"Because, while you were reading my verses, Withington had told me that you were an heiress, and had had the face to congratulate me; and though I was only a poor artist, I was honest then as now."

Helen seated herself lightly upon my knee.

"As if," she said, "things, mere tangible things, have any right to come between people who care! I never should have dreamed that you were such a materialist!"

"It is surprising," I admitted meekly, "in an artist."

"You ran away," accused Helen, grasping the lapel of my painting-jacket as if to keep me from repeating the offence.

"Sometimes that is the braver part."

"You made me love you and then you disappeared."

I put down my brush and folded my arms with Helen inside them.

"What would you have done," I asked, "if Withington had confessed that he had foreseen this, and had invited us on that yachting trip, thinking that a match between a penniless artist and an heiress would be a good thing?"

"I presume," admitted Helen, "that I

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should have done what you did. But think of the day when we landed in Palermo and they told me you were not coming back because of pressing business. Pressing business in Sicily!"

"It was riding a donkey eight hours a day," I explained. "I thought perhaps he could understand."

"Oh, how I hated it!" wailed Helen. There were actually tears in her eyes. "The beauty, the utter beauty and the desolation of it all! I thought I could never bear to look at water or sky or anything blue again."

"It is well that you do not have to see your own eyes," I murmured.

Then, at her feet in the deep grass, I made what amends I could, and I know that I was forgiven, for she kissed my hair lightly, and it was as if a petal had fallen there.

"How could I know?" I pleaded. "If you had not thrown my verses overboard perhaps I should not have gone ashore."

"What could you expect when I had practically asked you to say that you had written the verses to me, and you had told me they were about a lady in a dream? Besides, Aunt Malvina was looking. But quick, see!"

The mother bird, frightened by our voices, had flown off the nest and had called her loyal spouse to the rescue. Bolder than she, he came to a nearer twig and studied us, his head on one side, then on the other, as we sat breathless. Then the man bird flew to the hole and clung there, his brave back shining out from the soft brown of the bark as he studied the nest to see if any real danger threatened his nervous lady. Satisfied, he flew to the dead twig from which she trustfully watched him. Was there anything peremptory in the twitching of his tail? Meekly and gladly the gray-blue wife flew back and two blue eyes were turned to me.

"Surely chivalry antedated King Arthur!" said Helen.

"And by this token," I confessed, "I know that I should have stayed upon the yacht to protect you from Aunt Malvina."

"She was rather terrible," admitted Helen.

"Hist, did you see that?" I asked, on the afternoon of the next day.

"What?" whispered my wife. We were beginning to have the noiseless ways and alert eyes of the two-footed and four-footed creatures about us. Helen was sitting on the grass at my side, while I wrestled with the soul of an old apple-tree which I was vainly trying to fix on the canvas. And I ask you, gentle reader, how anyone with mere paint and brush could render up all the fragrance of its falling blossoms, the murmur of the golden bees among the leaves, the music of the breeze, and the changing light and shadow?

"Only a disappearing bit of blue, the wings of the father of the family getting dim with distance."

"Why did you ask?" asked Helen, looking up from "Love Among the Ruins." "Do you know, I don't believe anybody else ever had your skill in getting all the look of experience in a tree, all the expression of lichen and stem."

"The world doesn't think so," I answered truthfully. "Who buys my cypresses, or my poplars? That bird reminded me of something," and I went on working over an old twig.

"Of what?"

"Oh, a fool journey that I made once."

"Before you knew me or after?"

"After, of course. I never did foolish things until I knew you. It was after the donkey-riding in Sicily. I was in the railway station at Rome and a newspaper brought me good news of the failure of the Colorado Quicksilver Company, and I knew that your fortune was gone. Suddenly the whole station became full of you; I saw your face, coming toward me, going, and the thought that, after all, you were not utterly beyond my reach nearly turned my brain. Then I spied something that I was sure was a part of you, a pale, soft-blue gown, your very color, and I followed it."

"As if any self-respecting American girl would wear a pale-blue travelling dress!" said my lady disdainfully. "Why did you never tell me this before?"

"Ashamed," I confessed. "And besides, my dear, there are a thousand things I have never told you. Do you realize that we are not yet fairly acquainted?"

"I know a great many more things about you," said Helen, nodding sagely, "than you dream."

"It was a will-o'-the-wisp journey; we went north and north. I watched all the

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stations jealously, but the blue gown did not alight. All the air was filled with you; the blue hills of the distance were you when they faded away into the sky. The gleam of the Mediterranean was you."

Helen nestled closer.

"Then at Genoa the creature alighted."

"Poor boy!" said Helen, leaning her head against my knee.

"It was a yellow-headed English girl in a ball dress!" I said spitefully. My lady only laughed.

"Then you went on into Switzerland?"

"Yes, cursing the day that I was born. How was I ever to find you?"

"Telegram," she suggested, "or letters."

"Not to a lady who had thrown my love into the sea," I answered loftily.

Just here we were interrupted by so pretty a bit of comedy among the leaves that we straightway forgot our checkered past. The father bluebird had lighted on a dead twig and had called to his wife, with a soft little chirp, to join him. She flew to his side, and then he fed her with a long worm, the two beaks meeting, the two blue backs gleaming against the green.

"There is so much to be learned about life from the birds," said Helen absent-mindedly.

"You will observe," I remarked majestically, "that I was entirely right in my attitude. It has always been the duty of the man of the family to provide the worms."

"I like the worms you provide," said Helen quickly, for she was always aware of my mood even before it was written on my face, and she knew that my conscience smote me for not having found a fitter habitation for my daintily bred lady. That sloping roof and the rough door-yard haunted me with a sense of duty undone.

"To be sure it is only for the summer," I was thinking to myself.

"And everyone knows," said Helen, answering the unspoken words, "that tall grass is prettier than turf, especially when there are daisies growing in it, and that candles are much more lovely than electricity."

"Hello," I said, "that faded old paint is all scaling off."

"It makes a much better background for the climbing roses," insisted Helen, and she was right, for they were deep red.

But I was glad that my lady was content, for this old house, with its eloquent, worn thresholds and many-paned windows and low rooms through which life had come and gone, had grown very dear to me. I should have been loath to leave the great meadow to the east where the grasses swayed a little more luxuriantly each day in the wind; and the tall elm down the road, falling now in a cascade of green that just stopped short of foam, the drooping branches all a-ripple with young leaves; and the pool below the house where the young things of spring-time were still calling to each other in sweet, cool little voices.

"Whatever happens, we mustn't go away before wild strawberries are ripe," I said one night as we were eating supper out of doors. There was a mahogany card-table that just suited this purpose, and, though there was room on it for only three doilies, it sufficed to hold our blue plates and cups and saucers and old-fashioned silver spoons.

"Not until the bluebirds are hatched," said Helen; and, looking toward her, I knew that the fluttering heart of the bird had filled her with hope deeper than its own.

"Who made the sandwiches?" I asked, for they were of cream cheese and walnuts, and fit to eat upon the Delectable Mountains.

"I did," said Helen. "Who made this new dressing for the lettuce?"

"I did," I answered triumphantly. "We used to do it in the studio."

"Well, anyhow, I made the bread," grumbled Deborah from behind my chair as she drew near with the tea-cups. "It's well you've got me round, for you two hev no more sense about housekeeping than them two birds."

"You compliment us, Deborah," I told her, for even then the father bluebird was boldly gathering crumbs from our feast and carrying them home to his lady.

It was near the end of a golden day of earliest June; against our moss-grown roof the deep blue of sky began to glow with sunset, and I caught the outline of Helen's brown-gold head against the glory as I had seen it once before. I saw again that green Alpine meadow that I had found one day as I climbed the mountains above Lausanne to the Tour de Gorge, founded by the good Queen Bertha in the years when the fairy-

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stories were true. I had flung myself face downward on the grass of this meadow that began high in the blue heaven and seemed to stretch upward into the ragged edge of kingdom come. The far tinkle of cow-bells was soft in my ears, the cool air comforted my tired pulses. Below, the lake was wide and blue, and beyond, above, were the white peaks. Through the stillness came a voice; the tinkling of the cow-bells died away, and I rose, and stood, trembling.

Yes, it was Helen, coming straight toward me over that meadow that reached into heaven, and I took off my hat while she was still a long way off. So we met and in the silence read each other's faces. Then followed the foolish chattering of many voices and the frown upon the awful face of Aunt Malvina who, when she saw me, bowed majestically from out her plate-armor of silk and jet, but vouchsafed no word. Once, when she was at Helen's side, a sharp sentence reached me:

"Now that you are penniless you must avoid him more than ever," but I did not mind, for I was tramping over the slopes with my beloved and was with her when the sun went down. Lake and white mountain-tops were flushed with rose, and, while the land at our feet was green, the land afar off was touched with faint blue and amethyst, even as it was now.

There came a day when the wee bluebirds chipped the shell and five yawning mouths appeared in the dun-colored nest at the bottom of the hole in the old apple-tree. The man bird made great rejoicing at the coming of his first-born; the mother bird, wan but happy, fluttered from the nest and stretched her tired wings. The next day she took a longer flight; the third day she went and did not return. All that afternoon my thought wandered from my work, for either Helen or the father bird was continually flitting past me with an anxious face, and not all my pretence of not seeing could keep them from my mind. Coming home late that evening, after a long walk, I saw against the dusky shadows of the house and trees, something like a great firefly moving with trailing light. It paused by the bluebird's tree, and I saw that it was Helen, with a brass candlestick in her hand, peering into the nest. The light shone out in the darkness on her fair hair and pale blue gown, as she shaded her eyes with her hand.

"Dear," she said in a scared whisper, "the mother bluebird is really gone; something must have happened to her."

"Nonsense," I answered, "she is only taking a little vacation after her long sitting on the nest," but my conscience smote me. "What's happening to the flock?"

"Look!" said Helen triumphantly, and, gazing into the hole, I saw the brave, frightened eyes and the bright back of the father bluebird, awkwardly hovering his family.

"If she is dead now, just when those little creatures were alive under her wings, I cannot bear it," cried Helen, and I was silent, for I knew not what pain, beyond the understanding of a man, was tugging at her heart. Overhead stars were shining from out a dusky sky, and from our open windows streamed light that showed how green was the grass under our feet.

"It was under the stars in the old villa garden at Lausanne that I first told you of my love."

"The sky was deeper blue and the stars were golden," said Helen.

"And the fragrance of young grapes came on the moist night air from the vineyard below."

"Say the words over," whispered Helen, laying her hand upon my shoulder, and I did her bidding, but what they were no one but herself and the bluebird shall ever know.

The next morning my breakfast waited; sunshine poured through the window on blue cups and saucers, but the chair at the head of the table was empty, and my wife, like the bluebird's, was gone. Grumbling, I poured out my own coffee and got speedily to work, but I made a daub of my picture, and all the while I kept listening, listening with strained ears. He made me nervous, that devoted lover. Now there was a swift dip of wings from the apple-trees; now he was clinging to the side of the hole, his head on one side, peering anxiously in; all the while he was working bravely to get breakfast for his family, but never a gleam of blue wings or of blue hem comforted him or me.

"Cheer up; your lady is only taking a bit of vacation," I reassured him, but I am not skilled in lying, and the quick glance of his bright eyes convicted me. In my heart of hearts I was sure that the gray-blue mother bird was dead. Squirrel or cat, what had done the deed? And where had I been

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with my foolish right arm that went on painting, painting, while the tragedy had been accomplished?

At ten o'clock I, too, went searching; I could stand it no longer. Far by the edge of the brook, and along the old rail fences, I saw Helen going, wearily now, for she had been busy since sunrise. I could hear her calling to the lost bird, chirping, coaxing; I could see the bent head, and I knew that she had given up hope and was watching to see if she could but find the little breathless body and give it Christian burial. She was walking now along the gray-green fields of young oats when suddenly I saw her stop and listen; then she sprang forward, an incarnate joy. A minute later I was at her side; a mist made grayer the gray-blue eyes which matched the color of the little creature she held in her hands.

"It is, it is our bluebird! Look, its foot was caught in this old cloth upon the fence!"

Faint and almost exhausted, the little creature nestled in Helen's breast, but it seemed uninjured. Even the leg it had tried so hard to pull away from the tangled shreds of cloth was unbroken. So intent were we upon reviving this frightened fugitive that we failed to notice the half-forgotten, but all too familiar chuck, chuck, chucking of something down our solitary road. When Helen, all startled, looked up, the hated white machine was close upon us; it came to an abrupt standstill, and the old familiar glare of Aunt Malvina's eyes fell upon us as her goggles dropped.

"Why, Helen Merivale!" cried that lady.

"Helen Morton!" corrected my wife.

"Humph!" said Aunt Malvina. "Mr. Withington told me you were somewhere hereabouts."

With her goggles hanging about her neck and her long gray cloak catching on the rails, Aunt Malvina was actually climbing the fence, while the chauffeur grinned delightedly.

"I suppose you are aware," she remarked in her deepest voice, "that, as you will not be twenty-one for two months yet, I am your lawful guardian."

"Hush!" whispered Helen, with uplifted forefinger, "you will scare the bluebird. No, I think my husband is my lawful guardian now."

"You left me rather suddenly." Her voice broke slightly.

"We were dreadfully sorry," confessed Helen, "but there was no other way. I've worried a great deal about it."

"Are you aware, sir," said the elder lady sternly, turning upon me, "that you have given me a rather anxious time since you ran away with my niece and ward?"

"It would be inexcusable," I murmured, "if you had not given us such an anxious time before."

There was a grim quiver at the corner of Aunt Malvina's mouth.

"Well, you have impertinence enough to succeed," she remarked.

"Yet, as you have often reminded me, I have not succeeded."

"You haven't?" shrieked the old lady, treading down the tender grain. "Didn't you know that that foolish poplar-tree picture of yours is the talk of all Paris? Didn't you know that the Duc de Something or Other had offered five thousand dollars for it?"

I shook my head; the picture was in Withington's hands. I had told him to do as he pleased with it, and we had avoided the mails.

"There!" cried Helen in triumph; "worms, and more to be found."

"Child, have you gone crazy?" demanded Aunt Malvina.

"Come home with us; come home, quick!" cried Helen. Holding the bluebird to her bosom with one hand, she dragged Aunt Malvina with the other, and so walked at the edge of the grain to the lichen-covered bars.

"The tables are turned!" said Helen. "It's no longer the penniless artist and the rich girl; it's a case of the penniless girl and the artist who is going to be something better than rich—great."

"I've hunted up and down the whole country. Where have you been living, child?"

The older woman's eyes were dim.

"Come and I'll show you," said Helen, tugging. So we led Aunt Malvina into our gray-green paradise. The mother bluebird, released, fluttered weakly toward her nest, and, as she paused by the open hole, her mate flew joyously to her side, dropping into her mouth the dangling worm he carried. A minute later I heard her soft chirp, as five little wriggling heads were gathered under her tired wings.

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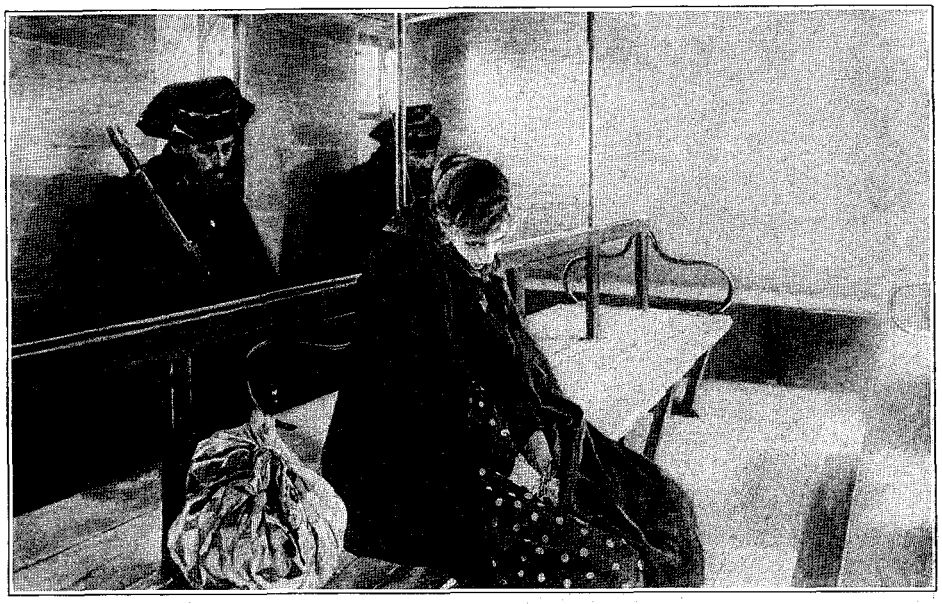

"Another Marguerite."

A GREAT SPANISH ARTIST

JOAQUIN SOROLLA-Y-BASTIDA

By Charles M. Kurtz

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PAINTINGS BY SOROLLA-Y-BASTIDA

SPAIN always has been a country of artistic ideals. The traveller in the Peninsula finds evidence of this in the early Roman remains, in the marvellous works of the Moors and in the architectural monuments of later date. The superior taste which establishes agreeable relationship between ornament and plain surface is found nowhere better exemplified than in Spanish architecture.

No painter in all the history of art more strongly has appealed to artists and amateurs of his own and succeeding periods than has Velasquez. He was one of the first of the Realists and was as much an Impressionist as Manet. He was a great interpreter, and, while a most serious painter, his work shows the joy which he found in it. Ribera (Spagnoletto) was a painter of wonderful strength, Goya was a technician and colorist of remarkable charm, Fortuny was a master of brilliant technique—and to-day there is a group of Spanish painters who produce work worthy of the country's artistic traditions—strong, forceful, splendid in color, fine in technique, individual and distinctly national. No other country has produced a stronger group of painters than Sorolla-y-Bastida, Zuloaga, Anglada-Camarasa, Ramon Casas, and a dozen others who might be named.

At the Chicago International Exposition of 1893, contemporary Spanish painting made its début in the United States. The Spanish Art Exhibit, as a whole, was not remarkable for high artistic quality, but the works of three men stood high above the average and suffered nothing in comparison with the works of the strong painters of other countries. These three artists were

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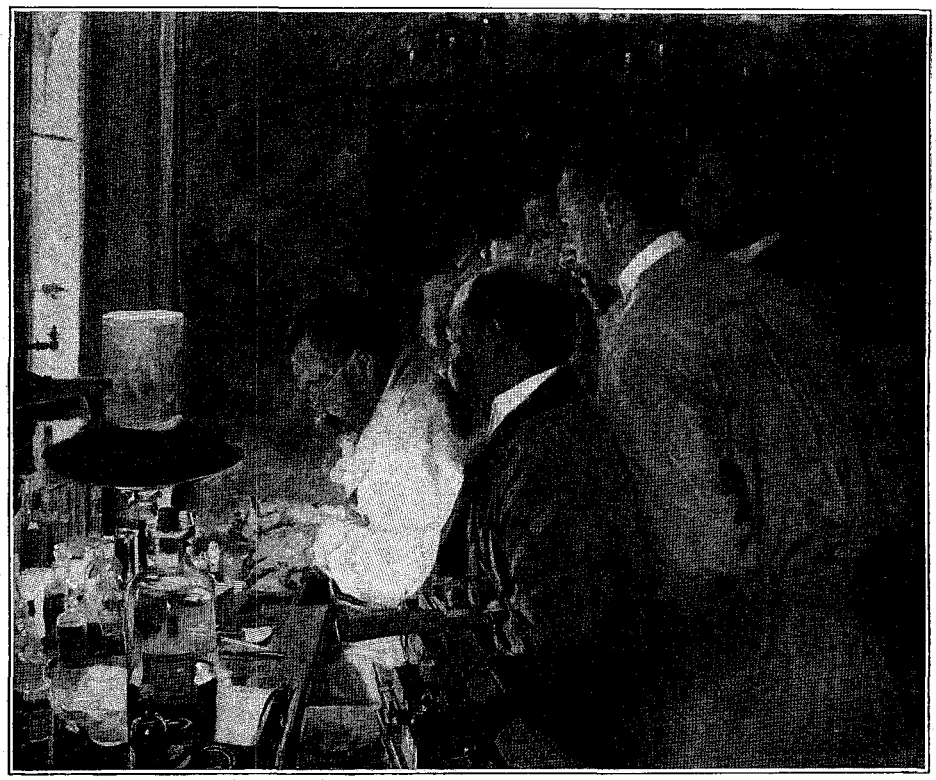
Joaquin Sorolla-y-Bastida, Ramon Casas and Santiago Rusiñol.

Perhaps the picture in the Spanish Section which attracted more attention than any other was "Another Marguerite," by Sorolla—a large canvas with figures of almost life size, painted in a broad, simple, but very adequate manner and marking a new and very distinctive individuality in the world of art. The painting was purchased for the permanent collection of the Saint Louis Museum of Fine Arts, and a reproduction of it is given herewith. It represents a young woman, with downcast head and an expression of deep suffering in her face, sitting, with wrists manacled, in a Spanish third-class railway carriage. Armed guards occupy the seat behind her. Beside her is a bundle with an orange and white checkered covering, containing her poor belongings. The sides of the compartment are painted a dull yellow, the guards wear dark blue cloaks with dark red facings, and the woman a black dress with white spots and a dark shawl. The painting is remarkable for its chiaro-oscuro. The effect of direct warm sunlight falling on the benches at the right, and the cool reflections on the end of the car from the windows at the left, are realistic in the extreme. As a study of gradations of light and shadow, of values, of fine tone and harmonious color, the work is exceptional. And yet, admirable as is this picture, it now must be regarded mainly as an expression of the promise given of the splendid work to follow it—work to place the painter in the same artistic rank with Sargent and Zorn.



In the Laboratory.

The year following the Chicago Exposition, the writer spent several months in Spain, and had the pleasure of meeting Señor Sorolla in his studio. The first sight of the artist—an exceedingly earnest-looking man slightly above medium height, with clear, searching eyes—satisfied the impression of him gained from study of his work. Here

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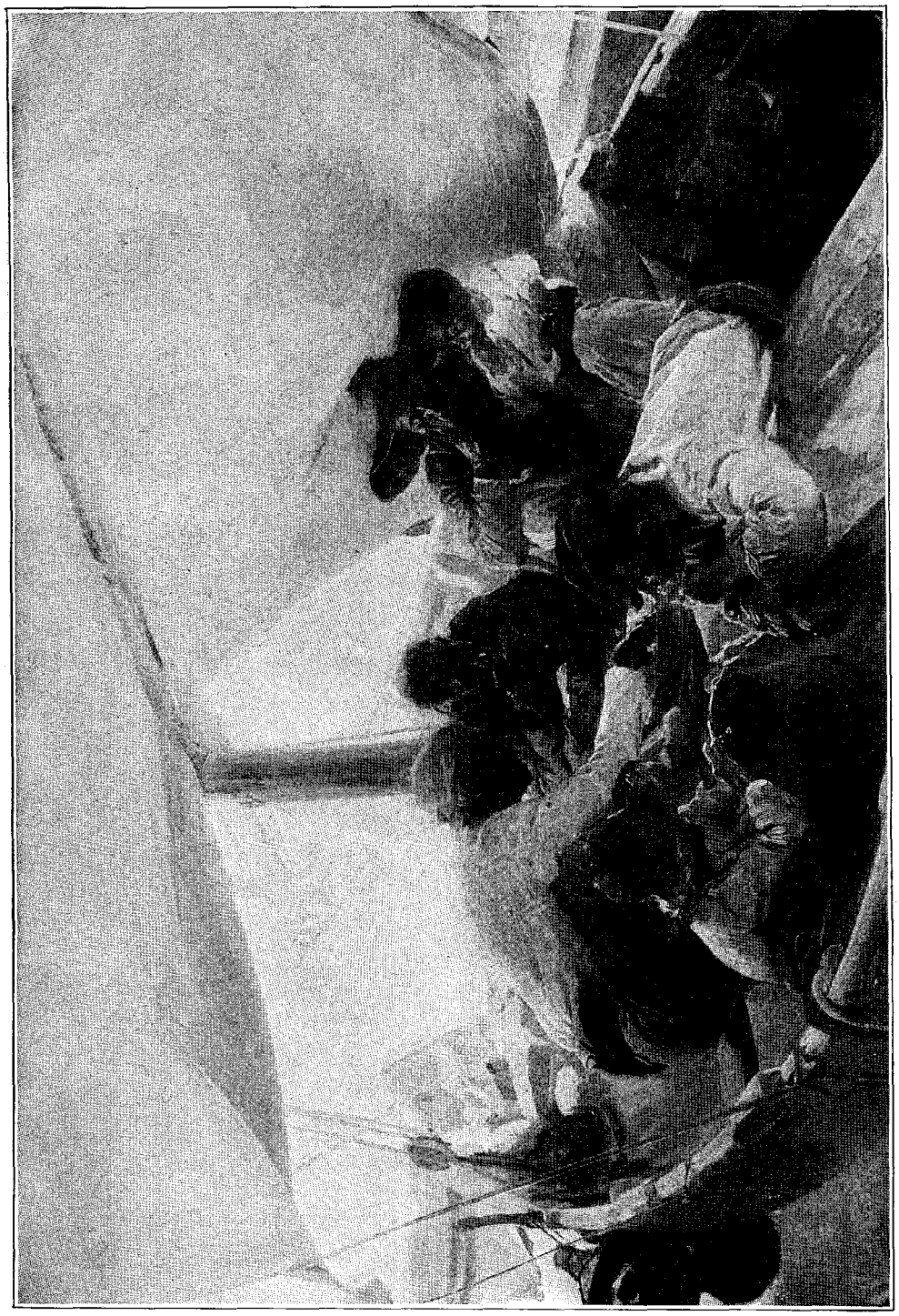

Luncheon on a Fishing-boat.

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was a man of ideals, of strong decision, indefatigable energy—such energy as one scarcely expects to find in a Spaniard—and of decided individuality.

At that time the artist had two large apartments crowded with pupils, and a studio beyond filled with his own work—studies and sketches apparently almost innumerable, representing genre, portraits, bits of landscape and stretches of sea beach and water. More versatility in choice of subject and manner of expression I never had seen in the work of an artist. And everything I saw proclaimed the man in love with his art—to whom hard work was also great joy.

Year after year since that visit I have seen Sorolla's work in the Salons and other European exhibitions where always it has stood out from its surroundings as exceptionally distinguished, and always has seemed to show a certain artistic advancement upon his work which had been shown before.

At the Paris Exposition of 1900, Sorolla's work fairly dominated the Spanish Art Section. He was represented by six important pictures and was awarded the Grand Prix for his large canvas, "Triste Herencia" (Sad Inheritance). He also was decorated on that occasion with the Cross of the Legion of Honor. Later, his painting, "The Return of the Fishermen," was purchased by the French Government and is now in the Luxembourg.

The "Triste Herencia" is not a cheerful picture, but it is a work of wonderful impressiveness. It represents a number of gaunt, afflicted children—some of them blind, others crippled, still others nervous wrecks and some bearing marks of disease—naked, in charge of a tall priest in a black robe, who has taken them down to the sea to bathe. Some already are in the water, others are on the sandy beach. There is blazing sunshine, and the sharply accentuated anatomy of the thin figures gives unusual opportunity for the exercise of the artist's vigorous technique in the representation of flesh in sunshine and shadow. The pink figures with their blue shadows, the burning yellow sand, the crisp blue water with its sparkling surf, all contribute to a work of wonderful charm, despite the repellent features of its subject. This picture at the present time is owned in America.

Portrait of the Artist's Daughter, Maria.

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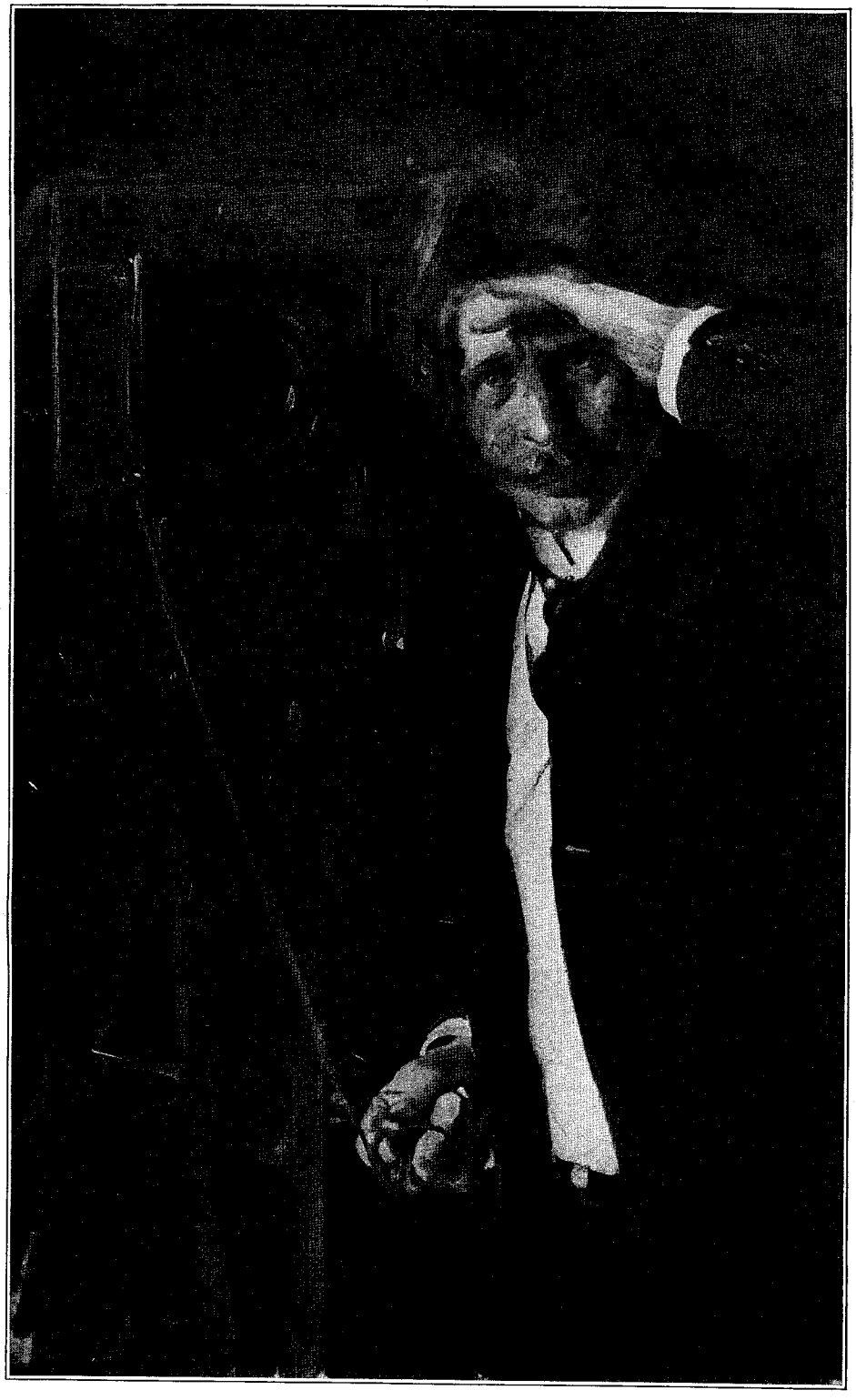

Portrait of Franzen, the Photographer.

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Portrait of Madame E——.

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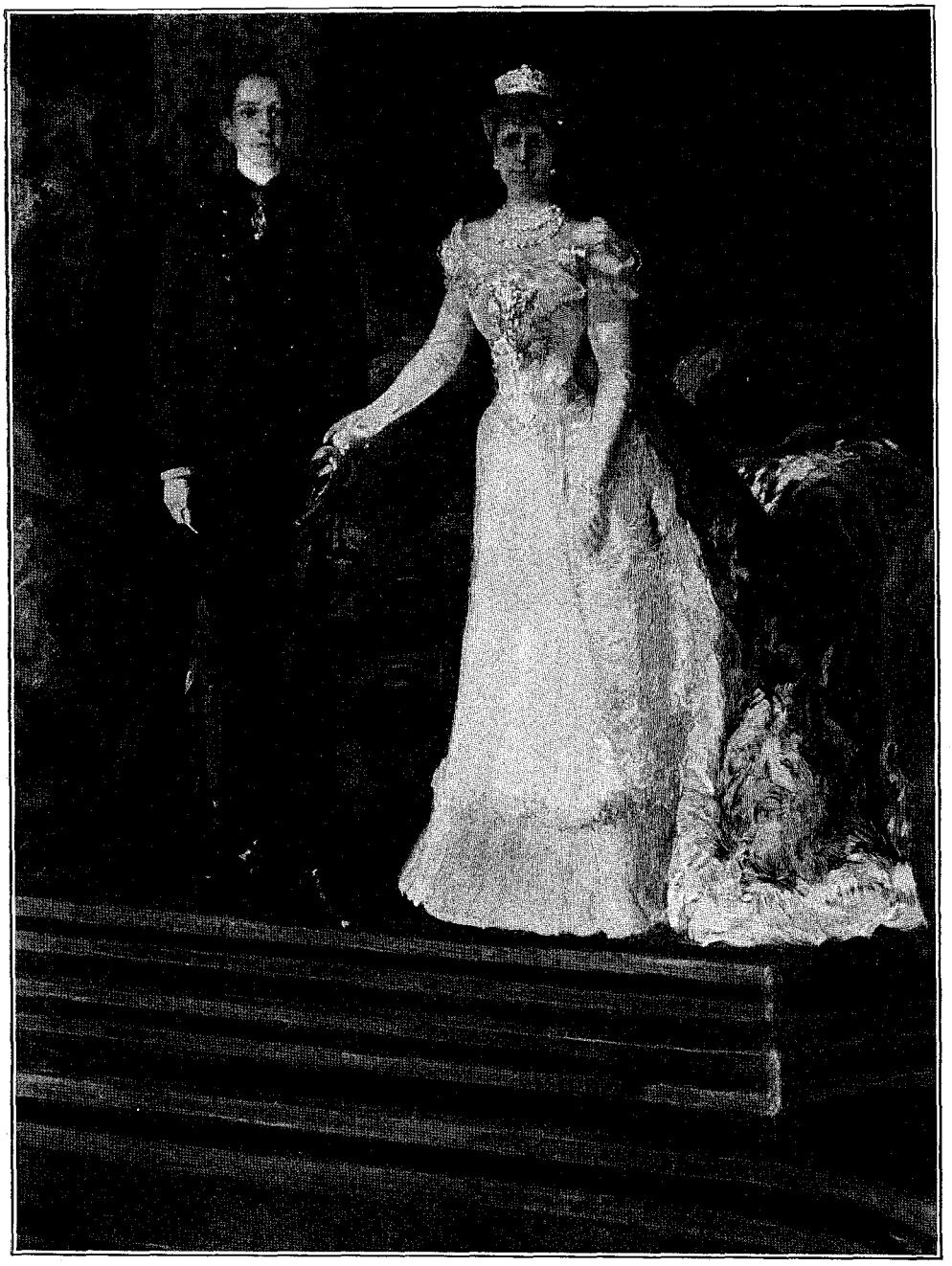

The Young King of Spain with His Mother as Regent.

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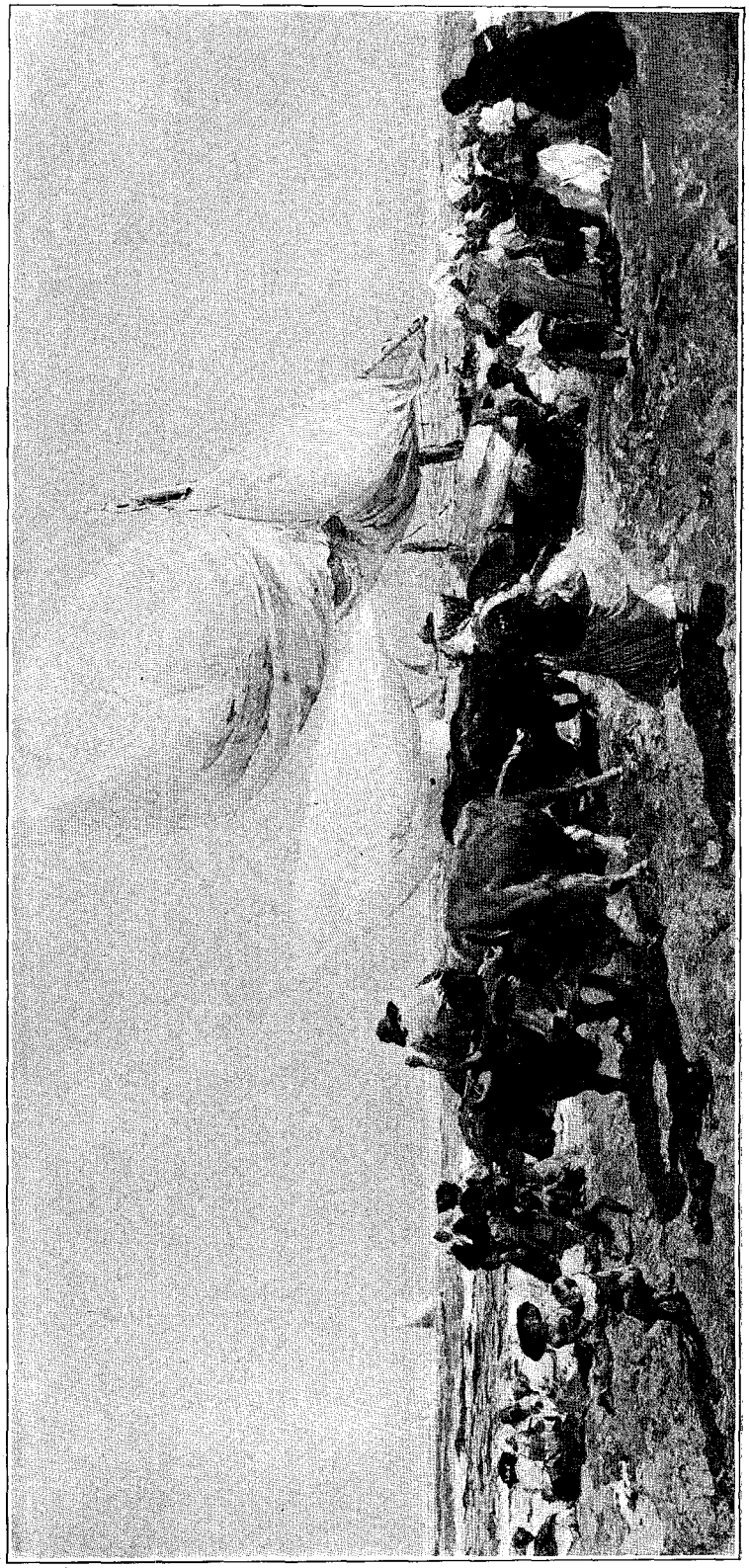

The Beach at Valencia.

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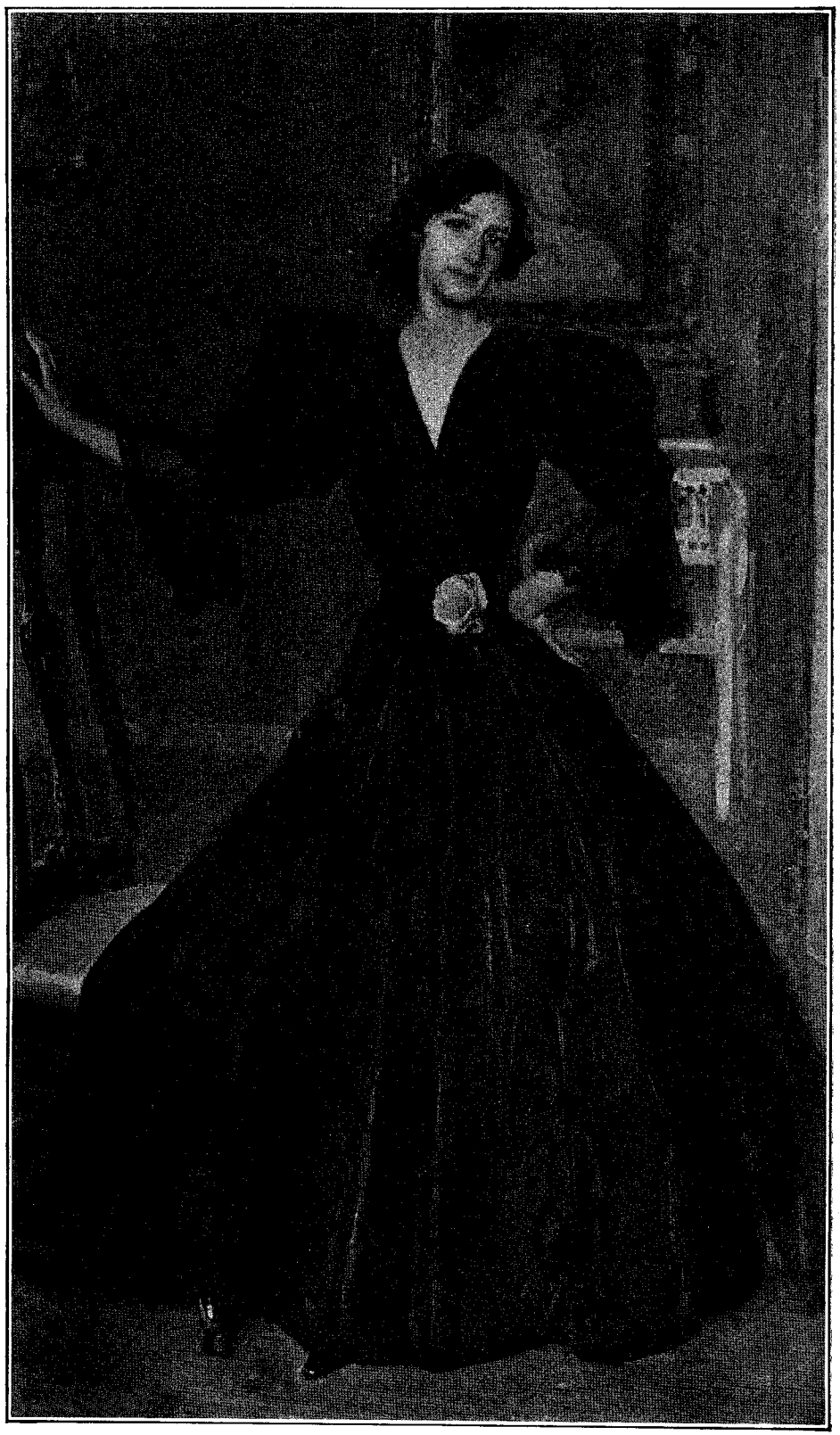

Portrait of Madame Sorolla.

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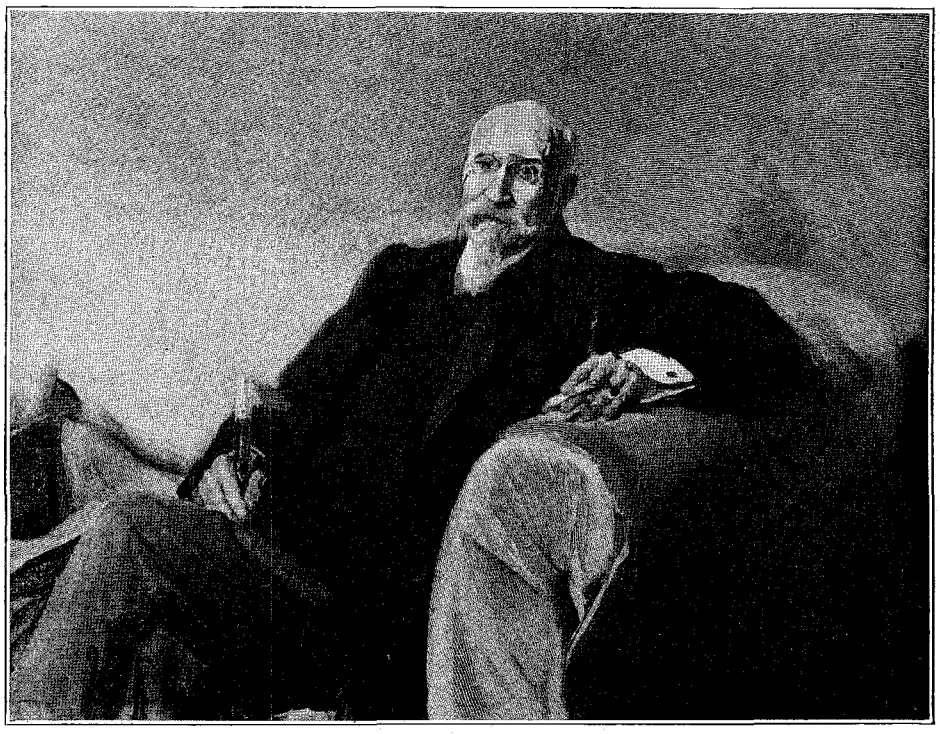
No other living painter surpasses Sorolla in his representations of light and atmosphere. He is especially fond of outdoor subjects—views along the coast, fisher-people, boatmen, boats with sails filled by the breeze, women with skirts blown by the wind, naked children playing in the surf, sturdy oxen with ropes attached, pulling up fishing boats on the sands. In his genre pictures he studies mostly the common people and paints them to the life. Indeed, all his work is instinct with vitality. He seems to imbibe something of the essence of whatever he studies and to involve it in his representation.



Portrait of José Echegaray, Author and Statesman.

No other painter seems to cover such tremendous range of subjects, or to show such variety in his technique. He is both Realist and Impressionist. In his outdoor pictures one feels that Sorolla works with absolute freedom. The luminosity of the sky, the sparkle of sunshine on water, the opalescent color playing through the lights and shadows on white sails, the vigor of movement in men and animals, all appeal to him strongly, are seen clearly, and are expressed with great facility, rapidity and truthfulness. In his interiors, where something more of finish is required, and especially in his portraits, where not only likeness is demanded but interpretation of character is essential, while his work still is broad and simple, it has in it something more of reserve; a suggestion of something recognized as due to the personality of the sitter as well as to that of the artist—a point which many of the modern portrait painters appear to ignore. And yet Sorolla's portraits have the effect of having been painted at a single sitting—indeed, it is almost certain that the last painting covers the entire canvas—but when one comes to study one of them, one cannot help feeling that such a degree of completeness, of adequacy—of realization and spiritualization combined—only could be reached through successive studies and paintings until the artist has come to absorb something of the character of his sitter, making it for a time a part of himself, so that he sees the world through his subject's eyes and some-

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Portrait of María Guerrero, the Actress.

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what combines his or her feeling with his own expression. In other words, he seems to study his sitters as an actor studies his parts, or as an author imagines himself in the place of the characters of his tale.

This is something only possible to a man of deep sympathy and of keen ability to interpret, but such a man is Sorolla. In all his portrayals in which humanity is involved, one feels the nearness of the artist's spirit. It is not alone the lovely color of the flesh in sunlight and shadow, and of the sparkle of the water on their wet bodies, that attracts the artist to a representation of chubby urchins disporting themselves in the surf. His picture conveys also a sense of the joy he finds in the enjoyment of these human amphibians, and in portraying it.

Young Amphibians.

Among Sorolla's figure compositions, one of the most effective is a group of men in a laboratory watching with keen interest the details of an experiment. This work, as an expression of absorbed attention, might be compared with Rembrandt's "Lesson in Anatomy." "The Wearisome Journey" is another composition in a third-class Spanish railway carriage, showing a group of sleeping women huddled together. It is a picture that in technique is related to "Another Marguerite," but in some respects it is stronger. "The Wounded Fisherman" is another work of the same class, but is still finer in quality.

One of the freshest and breeziest of the outdoor subjects is "Luncheon on a Fishing Boat"—a group of fisher-people making their repast under difficulties on board a small boat in a turbulent sea. The sunshine is dazzling on the water and one feels the moisture in the air. The figures are in the shadow of a sail-cloth stretched above the deck and swollen by the wind, showing exquisite reflected lights.

A composition of vastly different character and treatment from any of the others which have been referred to is a view in a handsome park with a number of courtiers and ladies in gay costumes indulging in a bit of frivolity in the immediate foreground. In this work there is a good deal that is suggestive of Watteau in subject and Fortuny in technique.

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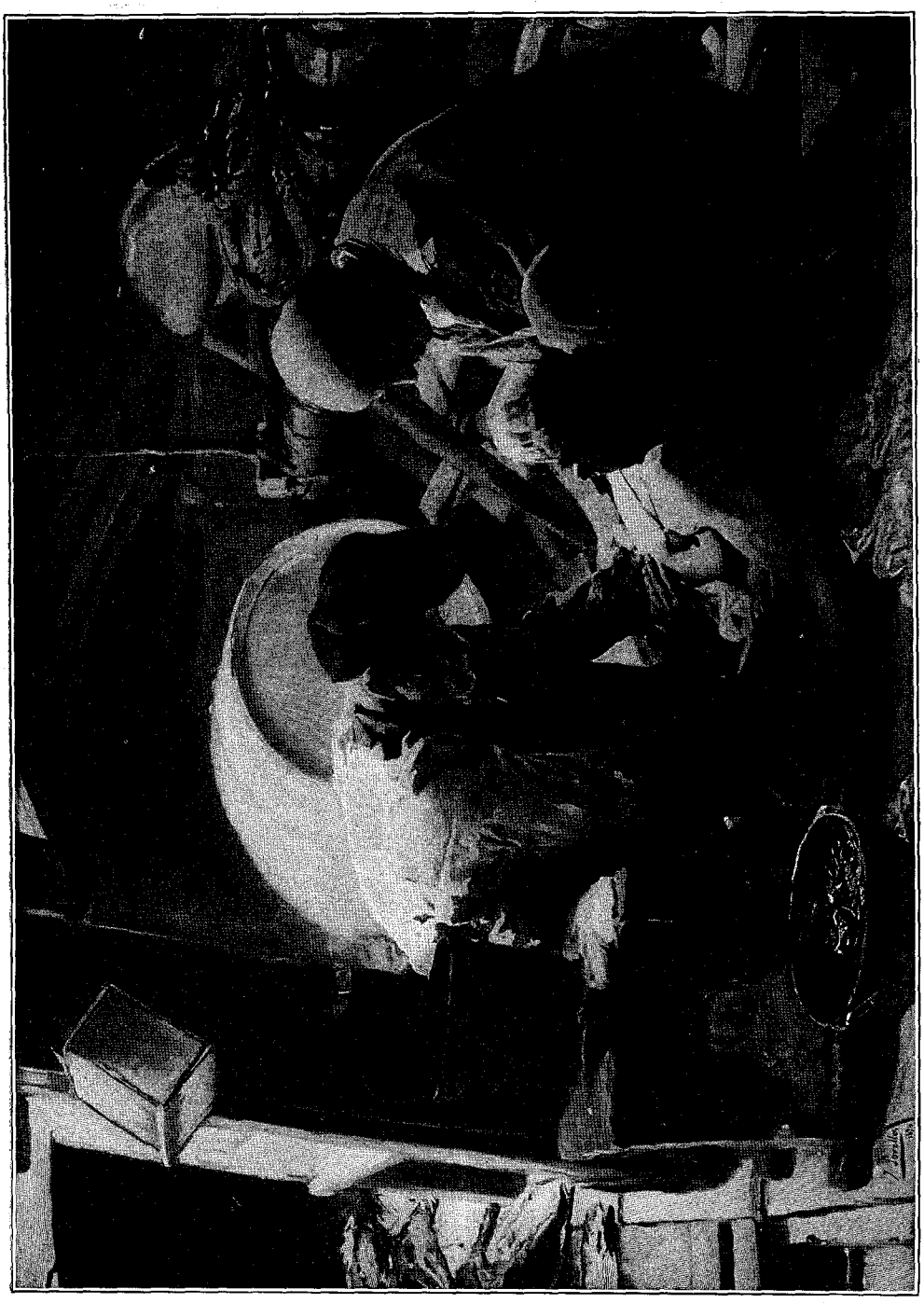

A Wounded Fisherman.

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Sorolla's forceful "Portrait of Franzen, the Photographer," as a character study might hang with the "Æsop" or "Menippus" of Velasquez. It is quite as human and is far more intimately personal. There is in it the effect of an instantaneous expression that yet reveals the man. One notes that this is not an ordinary photographer who merely "takes pictures for money," but a man who, like Sorolla himself, is in love with his profession, in which he endeavors to involve all the art that he can put into it.

The Painter Gomar.

The "Portrait of José Echegaray" presents one of the foremost men of Spain—statesman, philosopher, scientist, writer of poems, novels and plays. He has been Minister of Finance in Spain since 1895. In 1904 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. Here one sees the man of genial temperament, yet of firm character; analytical yet sympathetic; resourceful, yet not unduly strenuous in his activity. And here the artistic treatment admirably comports with the type of person represented. The same remark holds good in regard to the "Portrait of Benito Perez Galdos," novelist and statesman, and also the "Portrait of Maria Guerrero, the Actress." In this latter work one feels strongly the influence of Velasquez. In the "Portrait of Madame Sorolla," there is more the suggestion of Whistler, in the exquisite refinement both in the technique and in the subdued, subtle scheme of coloring.

The portraits of "The young King with His Mother as Regent," is a work of fine quality —simple, dignified, majestic. The mother presents her son in all confidence. The young King's expression has in it something of diffidence, but also a great deal of decision.

It is interesting to compare the technique in "Another Marguerite" and that which one finds, for instance, in "The Artist's Daughter, Maria." There is a world of difference in the expression of freedom, of sureness, of spontaneity in the two works. This last portrait has in it the same qualities we admire in the work of Sargent when Sargent is at his very best. It is worthy also of the best traditions of the older Spanish art. He is indeed a remarkable painter who at one moment recalls Velasquez, at another Goya, and again Fortuny or Sargent or Whistler, and yet who always preeminently is himself! Undoubtedly Sorolla has been influenced by many painters, but he has thoroughly digested and assimilated such influence.

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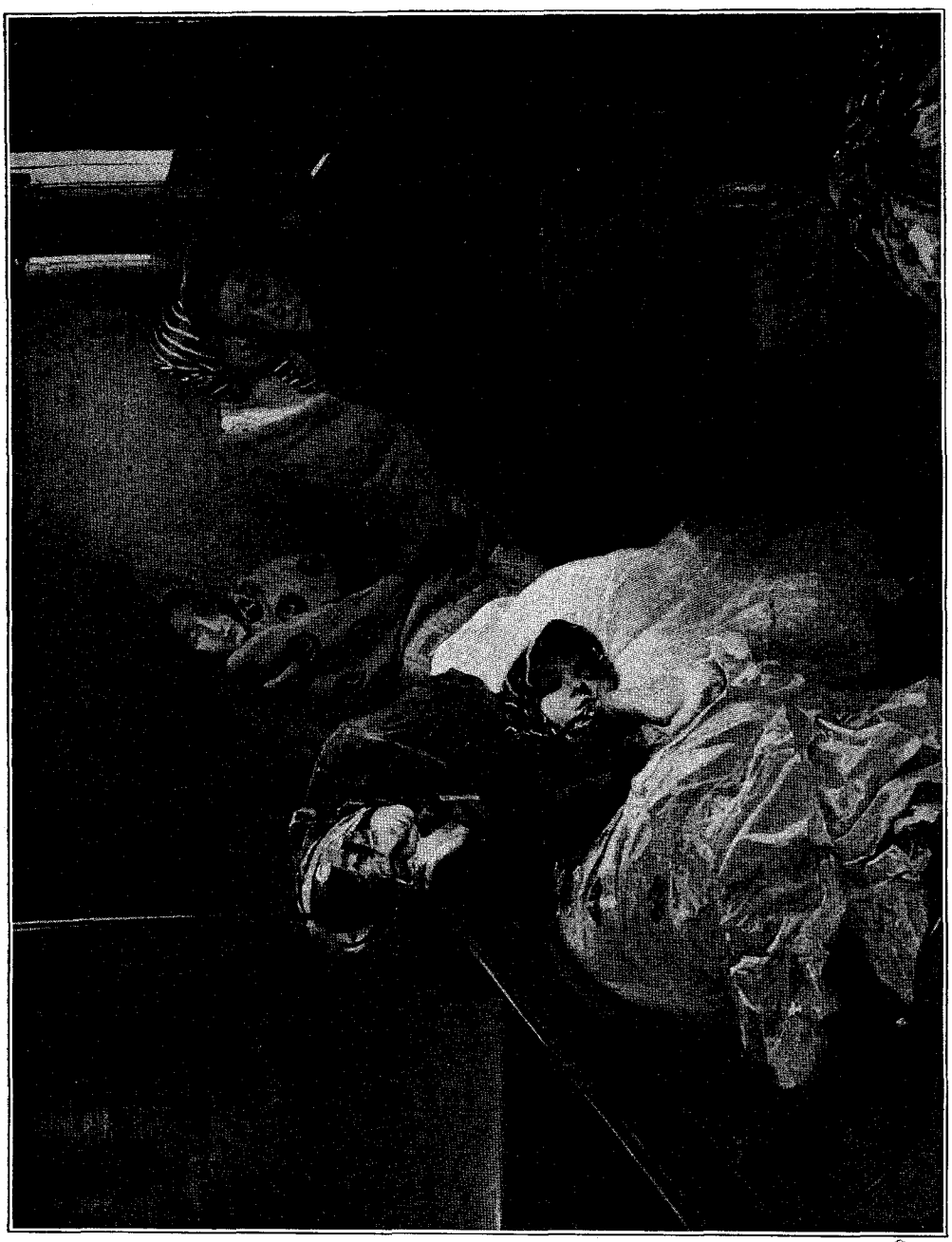

A Wearisome Journey.

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Portrait of Benito Perez Galdos, Novelist and Statesman.

At the Petit Gallery in Paris last year there was an exhibition of Sorolla's paintings and studies which attracted great attention. No other artist ever had been represented so comprehensively in a single exhibition. People were bewildered by the amazing display, involving such great variety and high artistic quality. It seemed scarcely possible that the five hundred works shown could be the production of one man within a comparatively short period! Yet this was only a part of what Sorolla had done during the past few years. He is represented by many works in public and private collections in Europe. He is a rapid worker, and as he is also devoted, constant, and apparently tireless, his production is large—which is an advantage to the world.

Señor Sorolla was born in Valencia in 1862, of humble parents. Left an orphan in early childhood, he was adopted by an uncle who was a locksmith. Showing remarkable talent for drawing as a child, he was allowed to enter a drawing school for artisans, and subsequently became a pupil of the Fine Arts Academy at Valencia. He was represented by a picture at a local exhibition in Valencia in 1883, and the next year contributed to the National Exhibition at Madrid, his work there receiving a medal. Then the Provincial Deputation of his native city provided him means to go to Rome. He studied there for a time, later went to Paris and thence to Assisi, painting constantly, but without producing any work of remarkable note. He returned to Spain, and in 1892 achieved his first great success with the painting, "Another Marguerite." Since that time his career has been a succession of triumphs marked by the award of medals, decorations, purchases for public galleries, government commissions and that growing demand for his work which has brought generous material reward.

At the present time Sorolla seems to be at the height of his power. In the prime of life, his ambition is stimulated by his successes, and every problem overcome strengthens and incites him to greater efforts. Despite his great accomplishments, he is still the earnest, eager student, finding fresh inspiration in every subject that presents itself appealingly.

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FOR THE FAITH

By Henry B. Fuller

Illustrations by James Montgomery Flagg

I

S.S. Gigantic, June 27.

My dearest Ella: We land at Southampton to-morrow and already my "budget" is giving me cause for thought. While, on the one hand, I have saved several valuable days out of a short vacation and have paid no more for a poor berth on a quick boat than I should have had to pay for a good berth on a slow boat, yet, on the other hand, the question of incidentals, and more especially of fees, begins to loom large. Such modest disbursements as I made four years ago seem quite out of date to-day; more, much more, would appear to be expected—may I not even say, demanded? I shall think twice before joining again in the June rush on a fashionable ship; I am altogether out of my class. I should have chosen a cheaper line, or else have put my pride in my pocket and gone second cabin. I feel sure that, in order to meet the expectations of my stewardess, I shall have to dispense with cabs during the whole of my fortnight in England.

Yes, the pace is desperate, yet almost everybody aboard seems determined to keep up with it. You may ask by whom it is set. If I mention the name of Mrs. William Gold Starr surely I need add little more. This woman, with her daughter, occupies the principal *suite de luxe* on the promenade deck. Her pile of trunks upon the pier was simply terrifying, and her expenditures on board must be lavish to the verge of criminality. Imagine whether a modest schoolteacher can compete with such a dominant figure for the attentions of the ship's servants. Whether on deck or in the saloon, all these creatures eye one with a pitying patience. "You poor young woman," they seem to be saying, "how completely you are out of place!" The table-steward seems already to have sensed the smallness of his *douceur*, and has begun to glide over me rather lightly in favor of worthier ones on the other side of the board. Dear Elizabeth—whom no one can accuse of looking for slights—feels as I do, and Candace agrees with us both.

"The old order changeth," she says, with a meek *moue*.

As for Mrs. Starr, she is "society" incarnate; no further word is needed. If you happened to hear Dr. Allen's sermon, delivered the Sunday before I left home, you have her characterized most completely. I hope his observations have reached far beyond the limits of Stoneham Falls; they deserve to be copied throughout the whole upper Naugatuck Valley. And it would do no harm if a good loud echo from that notable pronouncement were to reach New York itself. I won't profess to understand how the husbands of these women rake their money together, but the way the women themselves publicly throw these dollars about is extravagant and demoralizing to the last degree. With such artificial and insolent standards of value in vogue, how, I ask you, are the poor to live—and travel?

Mrs. Starr—whom I have not met, as you can readily conceive—scarcely impresses me as a woman of cultivation or of any great natural fineness. However, she appears to possess in abundance the self-confidence that boundless wealth can bestow. I have heard, vaguely, that she is seeking rest abroad after an exhausting social season; but she is the reverse of fragile, and I venture to prophesy that, once on the other side, she will plunge into things as heartily as ever she did at home. That she will endeavor to combine physical rehabilitation with psychical refreshment would be im-

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mensely too much to expect. You may trust the enormously rich to miss their best opportunities.

"Yes, indeed," says Candace.

The daughter is a presentable girl of nineteen; she seems to have been discreetly brought up and tastefully turned out. Shall I seem too bitter if I say that, besides being well-dressed and well-mannered, she is likely to be well-manipulated? If so—though I have an idea that she counts as one rather heavy battalion in a coming social campaign of some magnitude—I am willing to add that she will probably remain decently unconscious of her mother's manœuvrings.

Another battalion—and a heavier one—is a cousin or nephew, a stalwart young blond of twenty-two. Whether Providence is on his side remains to be seen. He is one of a set, if I may so express it. There are nine or ten of them: some blond, some dark; some younger, a few slightly older; but all of them uniformly stalwart—except one little fellow who is to sit at the back and steer. They are going to row on the Thames; they will represent their university in a competition for a "cup," as it is expressed, and seem confident of success.

I confess I have always thought of the Thames in connection with Windsor and Runnimede and Stoke Poges; but this is a world of change (as Candace remarked at luncheon to-day), and possibly a set of bare-legged boys from oversea pulling through a howling, cosmopolitan mob on an English river will fit in better now than ever before. You may imagine whether I, as an educator, can approve of such a degradation of learning as is involved in college athletics. First, a well-balanced curriculum becomes a mere appendix to a scheme of physical culture. And next, physical culture itself—if half the intelligence from the smoking-room be true—degenerates into a saturnalian rout of cigarette-rolling, wine-bibbing, card-playing, and general carousing. How much better, all round, a month of mountain-climbing in the Tyrol!

These boys, of course, "run" the ship; they are in evidence at all times and carry things with a high hand. A common interest in their success is assumed, and to-night's dinner is to be turned into a "banquet" in anticipation of their victory. Meanwhile Mrs. William Gold Starr is not minimizing her relationship to one of these young heroes. On the contrary, she is turning the connection to its fullest account—and nobody, I venture to say, better understands how to "set a squadron in the field." I cannot picture her as inconspicuous at Henley, the place where the race is to be rowed. She will hardly permit the aristocracy to neglect her.

"Their best people exist only for ours," says Elizabeth sweetly.

I can scarcely dwell upon this floating pilgrimage of pomp and luxury, of low ideals and foolish ambitions and general wrong-headedness, without a reference to one more passenger; for the *Gigantic* carries no less a personage than Leander M. Coggswell. If, as I assume, you are a constant reader of Joel Rawson's editorials in the *Palladium*, you will realize that our cup is indeed full and running over—that, in addition to the presence among us of the least desirable example of the social leader, the worst type of plutocrat our country has produced is intimately manifest to us in the flesh. You may recall Joel's paragraph of last month which described Coggswell as a blend of prestidigitator and pirate—an expression that was copied as far as Waterbury and Hartford. I should think such a trenchant bit of coinage would make Wall Street wince.

Well, Leander M. Coggswell is finely housed and served, as I need not pause to say, and he draws a great deal of attention when he strolls about—which is very infrequently—on deck. Cruel and selfish and ravenous as you may call him, and insolently defiant of law and right, he is nevertheless really imposing. I don't know that I have been more impressed by a mere fellow-creature since Professor Hence spoke to us at the Lyceum on "Menaces to Our Civilization."

Mr. Coggswell—whom I have given a wide berth—is, of course, a very large man. A small one, if thin, is insignificant; if plump, like Joel Rawson, he runs the risk of being slightly absurd—Joel is more effective, as you must acknowledge, in his editorials than in his speeches. But in bigness mere bulk may be disregarded. It is not that Leander Coggswell is large, but that he is also lean. Or shall I say, spare? Or shall I even say, gaunt? Large as he is, he seems to have reduced himself to a working minimum; with his black eyes and his

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yellow skin, he is like a half-famished panther. He eats next to nothing, and I hear that his digestion is all but ruined. Is this retribution? For the tale of those whom he has stripped to the bone would be a long one. Shall I mention any other name than that of Judge Amos Wright, in Stoneham Falls itself, who put the whole of that thirty-five hundred dollars into one of Coggswell's Dakota railroads and never saw a cent of it again?

However, one's physical digestion may break down, yet one's moral digestion hold out in all its original hardihood. There are men who can bolt any act of greed, of cruelty, of injustice—whether done by themselves or by others—and never feel a pang, never experience the slightest disquiet. Oh, who, with a conscience, can hope to be either happy or successful!

But a truce to these moralizings. Our magnate certainly looks older and more worn than a man of fifty-eight has any right to look; his face is sadly drawn and he is nearly bald already. Doubtless the report that he is going abroad to avoid a nervous breakdown may have some foundation in fact. He has wrecked his health, and for what? For a heap of dollars—dollars as superfluous to him as they were necessary to those he snatched them from. Many, too many, of them will be dispensed abroad, and the problem of travel-culture for persons of moderate means will become more acute than ever.

I ought to stop now and help poor Candace arrange the details of our first few days ashore. There she sits opposite me, at her Louis Quinze desk—a mate to mine—busy as a bee with our plans for Salisbury and Winchester and Wells, and blissfully forgetful of furnishings whose unchastened luxuriousness is little short of disgusting. I only hope her next winter's lectures on the "Christian Architecture of England" will be as successful as they deserve to be. But before I go to get ready for to-night's feast—oh, how maddening it is to be paying for so much more than one wants, or needs!—I might pen a few words about still another of our company.

This, as you may be prepared to hear, is a young man. He mentioned incidentally, this forenoon, in the course of a long discursive talk over the port rail, that he was twenty-eight. If he really is two years older than I am, well and good—for I had at once set him down as a mere skittish juvenile. No, I won't call him skittish; the epithets to describe him must be drawn from a higher vocabulary, and even from another language. Turn to the fiction shelves of your blessed library and consult the volumes you deal out so sparingly and discreetly to the fit and qualified. I mean the ones in which the hero is described, in cutting italics, as *insouciant* and *débonnaire* and *dégagé*. Well, that's Egerton Thorpe. These words don't give any idea of his eyes and hair and mustache, but he is light and has a sufficiency of color. I will go no further than to say that on a six-day boat he is entertaining, and that on a ten-day boat he might be indispensable. He has a fluent and babbling irresponsibility all his own. Judge, then, of my surprise when I learned that he was a nephew of no less a person that the great Coggswell. Yet how close a relationship is that? And how many nephews are like their uncles?

Well, this young Mr. Thorpe saw fit to compliment me on my looks. Philippa has some color of her own, as you know, and it doesn't flee away before the sea winds; neither do her loose locks lie flatter than another girl's. So he may have been excusable, and certainly he was as deft about it as you please. All the same, I chose to find him a shade forth-putting, and I gave him to understand that I had been praised before for my looks and had lived through it. He also had a discerning word of approval for my cloak, and that I didn't resent. If you think it would please Aunt Hattie, tell her—though I doubt whether a token of appreciation from any mere man would much affect that stern artist. All the same, I pooh-poohed the cloak; I was in my business clothes, I said.

"And what is your business, if I may ask?"

"My business," I replied, "is to make the best of myself—and of a few dozen other people."

"You have certainly succeeded with yourself to admiration," he returned—and I won't say that he seemed either bold or patronizing. "But the others—some of them must present pretty knotty problems. Style and good looks are not at all common, unfortunately."

"I am not concerned about their style and

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their looks," I retorted. "I'm after their minds and their moral natures."

He hesitated and gave his little mustache a twist or two. "Then you are not a——"

"No," I declared, "I am not a dressmaker going to Paris to bring back the fall models. I'm the instructor in history and literature at the academy in Stoneham Falls, Connecticut. What are you?"

He hesitated again—as if, after *that*, he needed to rally and reorganize his forces. In a moment or two:

"I'm a trained nurse," he said lightly. "But a great dressmaker clears her tens of thousands a year."

"Huh!" I answered; "you won't be able to make mere money talk with *me!* So your uncle," I went on, "is really quite ill, then?"

"Yes. The doctors finally united and pushed him off from dry land."

"I dare say he has done well to heed them."

"It would take more than a few doctors to frighten Uncle Leander. There was a month or two he found he could spare, and he came. He will find plenty to do."

"And you came along to help him in his business? When you call yourself a 'trained nurse' you mean you are his private secretary or his confidential——"

Egerton Thorpe laughed. "If I had been of any great use in his 'business' I should have been left on shore. However, I know a few things better than he does. I shop for him."

"Do you spend a great deal of money?" I asked boldly. "I presume you have plenty *to* spend."

"Money, yes. But not money alone, young lady. Gumption; taste. No one has the monopoly of that, you know," he said, looking again at my cloak.

"I've heard something about those doings," I declared. "So it's you who are largely to blame? Why can't you leave all those old things where they belong, among the people who created them? Such men as you and your uncle are brigands, plunderers, butchers—just another Black Band. What is the snatching away of works of art compared with the having created them in the first place?"

"The next best thing," he rejoined—not, as I am bound to admit, ungently. "We can't have artists to order, you know."

"I'm glad you realize that," I retorted. "But some of the money spent in ravaging Europe might be spent in training a line of art-workers at home. That would spare the Old World and beautify the New."

Well, dear Ella, I won't go on. You get a fair idea of the kind of people I have been condemned to spend a week among. I have touched on only a few, but there are dozens more. No faith, no convictions, no adequate ideals, no belief in anything beyond the brute power of money. Are we rotten before we are ripe? Must the best among us despair of the republic? My spirits are low to-day; I trust they may rise upon land.

Show mother anything in this that you think might interest her. I hope the trustees will relent and give you that Cyclopædia, after all. Elizabeth begins her black-letter work at the British Museum within a week. Best love to all.

Your true friend,

PHILIPPA J. HODGES.

II

VENICE, July 30.

DEAR ELLA:

I'm sure I intended writing you again long before this, but you will understand that every hour has had its tasks and has been crowded to the utmost. Since we have decided, however, to give Venice three whole days, I am glad to take up my pen in your behalf.

Every moment here is packed with interest and beauty; this afternoon, for example, we had a regatta almost beneath our very windows. I thought the occasion extremely picturesque, but two or three young Englishmen were most disparaging—neither the "form" nor the "time" at all impressed them. And truly, it was all far below the standards set up at Henley.

Henley, fatal name! You doubtless read the newspaper accounts of our mortifying collapse on that celebrated course. To have three men keel over in the boat within fifty yards of the goal was painful, indeed—unless one saw, as I did, Nemesis manifestly at work. We conceived the thing in the wrong spirit and went at it in the wrong fashion. For our men the race was an end in itself; for their opponents it was but the ordered conclusion of a year of normal athletic life. We stood high, for a moment, by straining on tiptoe, but the man who stands high

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when simply planted on his heels is the man who lasts—and counts. Young Bassett is spending his summer in the Tyrol, after all. He was the first of our crew to give way as the result of our presumptuous and vainglorious endeavor. He was in a dreadful state for a fortnight, and may thank his lucky stars if he comes to be his earlier self before autumn.

His aunt, or grandaunt—I don't know just what the relationship is—was as conspicuous there, in her own way, as he in his. She had a house-boat, a showy and flaunting affair, which we saw from the opposite side of the river. Such things are immensely expensive—only the very wealthy or the very ambitious (or both) attempt them. Our one day on the Thames, simple as were our arrangements, cost us cruelly, and all we had was the most modest lodging a mile from the course.

I was told that Mrs. Starr entertained several male members of the aristocracy and that her daughter received a vast deal of very marked attention. I gathered that the procedure, the etiquette, of house-boat life was quite elaborate and exacting, and that to entertain the British peerage successfully upon its native heath was something of an achievement—that even the attempt was evidence of a gallant spirit. Of course, I can't say how well Mrs. William Gold Starr succeeded. I hope she did better in her boat than young Bassett did in his.

Leander M. Coggswell was also on the course at Henley—as a member of Mrs. Starr's party. In fact, as I have recently discovered—though it's rather late in the day to make the statement—they are related; half brother and sister, or something like that. And here Elizabeth asks:

"What sort of a reporter would *you* make—coming in with the facts a month behind?"

But Elizabeth may go on with her biography of Giorgione. It is plain, now, why they all sat together in the saloon—though I supposed, then, that it was the result of the captain's desire to mass all his wealth and social prestige at one table. And we may easily imagine Coggswell at Mrs. Starr's own table in the small saloon of the *Waterlily*—a triton among the minnows, a plutocratic magnate among the impecunious incapables of Burke's big red-and-gold book! Fancy him, as I did, giving "tips," as they are called, to the avid aristocrats crowded around him, just as you feed crumbs to your goldfish.

You catch, now, the general outline of Mrs. Starr's social campaign in England. Do those people love sport? Then she pushes forward her nephew. Do they admire beauty and esteem dollars? Then she advances Miss Gladys a square or two. Do they crave hints from the lips of a crafty and energetic plutocrat? Then the black knight of "high finance" is made to take his zigzag course across the board. Oh, what sordid hopes, what mean ambitions, what grovelling ideals crowd the whole ignoble game! Could such things satisfy you or me as an aim in life? But let me drop all these degrading and debilitating considerations and pitch upon something with a tone more tonic.

While Elizabeth was enjoying her precious Early English fortnight at the British, Candace and I did the universities and several of the cathedral towns. Winchester, to which we were able to give four whole hours, was wonderfully satisfying. To me, the most striking things about the cathedral were the chantries, Bishop Gardiner's among them. A grisly old prelate, that; but he had convictions and lived up to them. At Oxford, where we thought it really necessary to remain over night, we made a special point of the Martyrs' Memorial. Poor Ridley and the rest! They, too, had convictions and suffered for them. Upon returning to London we visited Smithfield. It is now brutally modern and prosaic, but we prized the opportunity of standing on the spot where other martyrs were glad to die for the faith that was in them.

As for France, I pass over Paris; but be sure we visited Amiens and Rheims. It was all the age of faith incarnate, when men alike built and battled on conviction; yes, and women too. For at Rheims I thought less of soaring vaults and pinnacles than of poor Joan of Arc placing the crown on the head of that none too worthy king.

When in Provence it was hard to keep from casting an eye on Languedoc and giving a thought to the Albigenses. I have always had an immense sympathy for those light-hearted heretics; but I have also felt no less an interest in Pope Innocent, who was prepared to uphold the purity of belief, as he understood it, by any means whatso-

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ever. Is it Gibbon who says somewhere that there are epochs when the settlement of a point of doctrine seems of more importance than the depopulation of a province? Perhaps you can find the passage in one of those five volumes—so seldom disturbed!—behind the Franklin stove. If the remark, however, refers to an earlier age don't accuse me of misquoting. But whether quoting or misquoting, I place Innocent the Third among the figures of my Pantheon; and if I have time at Rome, I shall run up to Segni and try to find the palace where that masterful soul was reared.

And now about Italy, the thrice-blessed. O Ella, how can I begin? And if I begin, how can I ever end? Let me but say that my earliest expectations are already more than realized. These first arose, if you will know, in London—yes, as early as that—in the Quattrocento room of the National Gallery: Lippi, Bellini, Angelico, and dozens more, illustrious or obscure, that I will not pause to mention. Oh, those honest, sober, faithful creatures! No falsity, no frivolity, but such a complete dedication to deep and direct earnestness. They believed, if ever men did, in the seriousness and sanctity of the work they were called upon to do. Quaintness, oddity, naïveté, awkwardness, if you like, but an endless depth of faith, of conviction. And what I found in the London gallery I have been finding, for the past week, here. Milan, Bergamo, Verona, Padua—they all tell the same tale of firm and triumphant belief. Can *we* believe? Can our lips frame a creed, or our forces act upon it? We falter; we hesitate. The more science tells us, the more our hearts fail within us.

But I am taking a heavy and emphatic tone for one who has just returned from a lightsome evening in the Piazza. There was moonshine and music and a great throng, native and foreign, and a gentleman came along and offered me an ice. Have I mentioned a Mr. Thorpe—Egerton Thorpe? Well, it was Mr. Thorpe who offered me the ice. He dropped down in Venice only yesterday from Cortina, in the Dolomites. The rest of his party, all and several, especially young George Bassett, are in the Salzkammergut, recovering from their English campaign and hobnobbing, doubtless, with the Important Ones at Ischl. Mr. Thorpe said he had come to Venice for "a day's shopping." That means, I soon discovered, a week's search for carved and coffered ceilings. His uncle's predatory habits cannot be quieted down. Are we in the midst of another Renaissance, with the despot and the art patron once more in intimate fusion?

My young man mentioned Henley, and said that he had seen our little party in the crowd. He had tried to overtake us, but had failed. He was sorry no occasion had arisen that made it possible for me to meet the ladies of his party—implying, rather remotely, that it was a delicate task for a man to promote acquaintance between women.

"Yes," I retorted, "there is always the risk of confronting a great lady with her dressmaker."

He laughed lightly and easily, and I was glad enough to have it that way. Then he went on and gave us the details of his campaign against the doomed Venetian palaces.

"How much longer is this shameful pillage going to last?" I demanded. "I would almost rather that you employed such rapacity in 'business.'"

Candace was aghast, but I signified to her to go on with her ice.

"You are hard on business," he replied. "But business, according to the most recent authorities, is war. Pillage is involved in both."

"War, eh? Is it, indeed? Then it would be better if several millions of our simple-minded Americans came to understand it so. Some of the softer-hearted among us—'recent authorities' in their own feeble way—think that business might be, not war, but co-operation, even co-ordination."

"Not yet; not for a long time," he submitted.

"You are posted, then? You are an 'authority' yourself?"

"Well, I know about how things run. I have had some fair chances to learn."

"And I suppose that, pretty soon, you will be putting your knowledge into practice?"

"Pretty soon, if ever. My uncle tells me I am close to the last call."

"Which means that he will presently take you in hand and re-create you in his own image?"

"Possibly so, and possibly not. Nobody has found me too tractable yet."

I told him that I didn't find him very

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wild, and said that perhaps somebody would take him in hand some time and tame him without much trouble. Candace clattered her spoon in her empty dish, and I let her clatter.

I was willing enough to hear something about his aunt and cousin—I render these relationships but approximately—and I treated Candace by silent suggestion so successfully that she fell low enough to make one or two inquiries. Yes, the ladies were now resting in Austria from their previous rest in England. Mrs. Starr was cultivating Serene Transparencies, and Miss Gladys was tolerating the various mountain spas by reason of hopes held out that more brilliant scenes might presently dawn in Italy.

"Of course it all depends on poor Geordie," said Egerton Thorpe. "He isn't coming on any too fast. Neither is my uncle."

"I hope he eats more on shore than he ate on the steamer," I observed. "I never saw a big man eat so little."

"He is eating very little still. What he does is to drink. I never knew there were so many doctors, or so many kinds of water. They hurry him from place to place, from spring to spring, and the faster he travels the yellower he gets. He ought to have let go a little sooner. But it's always one deal more. This last one was too big and too hard."

"I read about it," I said. "It was also too outrageous." This was the affair, Ella, that kept Joel Rawson frantic for a week. "Why, he took that Kansas railroad away from the other man by main force. He didn't even have a majority of the stock!"

"What are stockholders? He got a majority of the directors. Business is war."

"You still stick to it, do you? But when you come to it, what are directors?"

"You have the right idea," he acquiesced jovially. "It's always the one man in the end."

Did you ever hear of more atrocious doctrine for a republic? And then to praise my "idea," and thus make me almost an accomplice! I could have taken that young man by both shoulders—right before the crowd—and given him a good shaking.

But what I really did do was something quite different. He asked me to go with him to-morrow to see one or two of his palaces, and I have promised to. Dearest Ella, do not condemn me, do not despise me. . . .

Yours ever,
PHILIPPA J. HODGES.

III

PISA, August 19.

DEAR ELLA:

I am not going to tell you about the Leaning Tower; no, nor about all the other wonders and rarities I have seen during the past three weeks. Rome, Florence, Orvieto, Spoleto, Assisi, Arezzo, Perugia—you shall cull my impressions of these various places from my diary after my return home. I have kept it most faithfully; no evening, however tired I may have been, has passed without its page. Also, my monograph on the Guelphs and Ghibellines—in which your devoted Philippa tries to reduce an utter jungle to something remotely resembling order—is pretty well sketched out. I am not sparing myself, as you may judge.

Elizabeth, who is less robust and seasoned, gave way a little at Assisi and spent the day in bed. Candace was quite willing to stay by her, so I was able to visit the church there a second time, and even to double back to Spello for the Pinturicchios in the cathedral.

We have decided to give a whole week to the towns of northern Tuscany. We shall take them rather slowly and easily—not more than one a day. If my first impressions of Italian painting—received in London, as you recall—were confirmed in Lombardy and Venice, think how much more completely they have been strengthened in Umbria and Val d'Arno. Such faith, such humility, such firm devotion to the truth as they saw it!

The other day a mysterious invitation came to me to attend an entertainment given by the American consul in his villa at the Bagni di Lucca. As we were then at Lucca itself, I decided to go. If it had been a summons to a reception at the embassy in Rome I should have had to think twice; but even a girl who carries all her clothes in two portmanteaus need not fear an informal little garden-party in the provinces. The summer colony all turned out—Americans, English, Italians—and really your Philippa looked about as well as any of them.

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You will be surprised, as I was, to find that our steamer friends, the Starrs and the Coggswells, were present. I had no idea they would show themselves so patriotic; for too many people of wealth and social prominence affect to ignore our representatives abroad—at least anybody below an ambassador. Both Mrs. Starr and Mr. Coggswell were very much stared at, and very much courted; but I will do them the justice to say that they did not make themselves too large for the occasion. The great Leander developed a faculty for meeting other people on terms of apparent equality; and his sister, whom I met briefly, really betrayed traces of a latent motherliness that life in a different sphere would doubtless have brought to a fuller development. She has rather pleasant eyes when one gets close to her. She remembered seeing me on the steamer, and appeared to be interested in a plan of tour so different from her own. "Our own plans," she sighed, "have been upset completely."

The girl Gladys was very beautifully turned out, but had a strained and apprehensive look that compared none too favorably with the repose and self-containment of several English girls who were present. The boy "Geordie" was on hand, too; he has had his ups and downs, and, on the whole, has bettered but little. These young people, never having seen Italy, and having tired of the Alps, had insisted upon descending to Maggiore, and had then in due course moved on to Tuscany. It is a lively fortnight at Florence, I gather, that has put young Bassett back, and they are now talking of sea air for him—at Viareggio, possibly. For Mr. Coggswell himself, now yellower than ever, Montecatini is proposed, though he is very impatient, they say, to get back to London. He has the purchase of a steamship line on his mind. Think of that—in his condition!

Miss Gladys was very much admired, especially by the Anglophile Italians, of whom there were several at Mr. and Mrs. McKeever's party. One in particular, the Marchese Sansalvo, made himself impossible to be overlooked, either by Miss Starr or by anybody else. He was a handsome, robust man of thirty-three or thereabouts, and very ingratiating and assiduous. Your Philippa never claimed to be a person of great social experience, but she set Master Federigo down as an expert. Mind, I do not say, a specialist; for few of the Italians really seem to "jell." I mean to say merely that our noble appeared to be very practised and efficient in his own environment—an environment in which cosmopolitan garden-parties are an important element—and might be counted upon to hold his own in his native Italy, however compromised and corrupted that Italy may have come to be. Doubtless he would be ground exceeding small if unfortunate enough to be caught in the mills of the gods now dominant throughout America. His title is genuine, Mrs. McKeever assured me; what is more, his family have a page in the *Almanach de Gotha*. Mrs. Starr's face and manner never beclouded *that* fact for an instant.

And so the marriage mart goes on! Isn't it deplorable? Isn't it disgraceful?

Of course there was a good deal of whispered gossip in circulation about the Starrs. One reason why they left the Tyrol was, it seems, a young Austrian baron. He was very impetuous, and, as he possessed some independent means, vastly self-important. I gather that he became a trifle obstreperous and that Mrs. Starr found it advisable to carry her daughter off. I don't know whether or not he is expected to follow.

O Ella, isn't it depressing! Isn't it ignoble!

Mr. Egerton Thorpe was also at the garden-party—perhaps I have mentioned him in previous letters. He has dropped carved ceilings and has taken up terra cottas. These artistic activities are still in behalf of his uncle; the nephew has turned himself into a sieve and is *screening* Tuscany for Della Robbias. I met him early in the week at Pistoja, where he was hunting down *bimbi* and the like, just as a dog scents out truffles; and I encountered him again here, only this forenoon, in the Campo Santo.

"How long are you going to stay?" I asked him.

"As long as you do," he replied.

"And I am going to stay as long as *you* do," I returned. "Orcagna and Gozzoli are not to be ripped from these walls if I can help it. Neither is this blessed old place going to be transported bodily to Long Island."

He laughed. "I assure you, my uncle doesn't like Orcagna at all and hasn't any particular fondness even for Benozzo Goz-

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Drawn by James Montgomery Flagg.

I signified to her to go on with her ice.—Page 438.

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zoli. They are perfectly safe here. So is the building. So are the monuments. So are the cypresses."

"I see," said I. "Orcagna—or whoever did those great things—is too severe, too given to the stern realities. And Gozzoli is too *intime* and *naïf*. You must have pomp and splendor——"

"Such as Della Robbias give?"

"Oh, leave those poor things alone! Let the land that originated them keep them a little longer. They were born here, and they belong here. Restrain yourself. I'd much rather you went back to America and learned to rob your fellow-citizens."

He laughed again—sometimes the very bluntness of the truth takes from it all its effect and makes offence impossible. "Come, a man with the weight of half the world on his shoulders must have his diversions and distractions," he said.

"There are other diversions besides out-and-out robbery," I returned.

"Yes; there are—garden-parties; but they don't go far. All the same, I was glad to see you at that one."

"It was a pleasant break in the routine work of my trip," I acknowledged. "And it was interesting to meet—finally—the ladies of your party. Mrs. Starr was quite civil."

"She didn't mistake you for a dressmaker, either, did she? Well, there wasn't the slightest danger."

"I looked as dowdy as that, then?" I asked sharply. "My father was a poor country doctor, and I'm travelling with all my things in two portmanteaus; but he managed to do some good in his day and generation, and I myself——"

"Come," he said quickly, "no more of that. You looked better than anybody else there"—privately, I think I did—"and you've got about four times too much spunk. Do you want to drive me out of town?"

Well, when the thing was put as plumply as that to me, I didn't. So, after we had left the Campo Santo, I let him accompany me through a few of those quiet streets (keeping on the shady side, for the day has been most oppressive), and along some of the cooler reaches (though they were all warm enough) of the Lungarno. How delightful this town must be in May or in October! But a poor school-teacher cannot choose; she must take the exhausting midsummer as it comes.

We saw several churches here and there (they, at least, were cool), and indulged in a good deal of gossip which, I fear, contributed little of value to the cause of culture. Mr. Thorpe told me about the Viennese baron, a fiery young particle who had rather presumed on his rank and his independent fortune; and he referred once or twice to the marchese. Sansalvo, it seems, was educated at Oxford, and is thought to be a rather good fellow. But I believe the girl would do better to marry some bright young business man at home. If unhappiness comes she will have that mistakenly ambitious mother to blame.

We sail on the 10th of next month, and I shall be back among you at the Falls on the 20th. This will be two or three days after the opening of the academy; but the board (some of whom have been abroad) will understand what the fall rush is and will be indulgent. The coming three weeks we shall give to Bavaria, Switzerland, the Rhine, and the Low Countries. I especially wish to see Cologne and Antwerp. The weather will become cooler as we go north, for one thing; the last month, unusually warm, has been trying for all three of us.

No more this evening; my diary still waits. Joel Rawson, in his last, asks if the tyranny of Privilege—with a large P—is any more oppressive in the Old World than it has become in the New. What a question for mid-August! I will discuss it with him on my return. Good-night.

Yours affectionately,

PHILIPPA.

IV

VILLA DEI PLATANI, SAN REMO, October 13.

Your last letter, my dear Ella, is utterly ridiculous. There is no cause for your becoming hysterical. There is no reason for your going off in a panic. If my own mother can take things calmly and sensibly, why can't you?

I am not at death's door. Never mind what Candace and Elizabeth tell you. I am much better than when they left for home. Dr. Rubino, who is quite a pleasant old fellow when you get accustomed to him, has been letting me sit up for a week, and for the last few days he has allowed me to read and write a little. I am getting along perfectly well. All I need, he says, is rest and

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good air and cheerful company. The rest and the air I am getting in abundance. As for the company—and its cheerfulness—you shall hear.

Briefly, almost everybody in the house is on the shelf. Mr. Coggswell gained nothing at Montecatini, nor did George Bassett especially pick up at Viareggio. Besides, neither place was very attractive to people who have been almost everywhere and who have always commanded the best. There was talk of Nice and of Cannes; but either of these, in our present state, would have been quite as far the other way, and they compromised by taking a villa for a few months here.

Mrs. Starr has been most kind to me, despite very exigent concerns of her own; the motherliness I detected at the Bagni is even more abundant than I guessed. She is treating me like a real daughter, and yet her own daughter and that daughter's future have become a very grave problem on her hands. My peculiar position in the household must make comment cautious, but I may venture a few words for your eye alone.

Federigo Sansalvo has looked in on us once or twice; he is an important factor in the problem. That the villa is little better than a sanatorium does not seem to intimidate him in the least. He grows on one, though he is a good deal of a puzzle. Are the Italians complex, or are they simple? Are they sophisticated, or are they naïf? I give it up. And to complicate matters still further, a very nice English boy has dropped down upon us from the Alps of Dauphiny, where he has been at his autumn mountaineering. He is another factor.

He was one of the crew at Henley—that is, he was a substitute member; he would have rowed if any of his side had fallen out during training—only none of them did! He, too, has intentions of the most obvious nature, and if Mrs. Starr is deeply concerned, poor Gladys herself has been brought by internal debate to the verge of nervous collapse. Young Willoughby is only twenty-two, and is in every way delightfully suitable, except that, being a convinced Briton, he would budge little or less for an American wife, and that he has no title. His family is immensely old—so old, in fact, that a title has been more than once refused, as likely to add nothing to its lustre. That, of course, is all very well for those who know; but how many *do* know? How is the world in general going to apprehend your choiceness unless you are ticketed for its eye?

That is where Sansalvo has the advantage; I have already spoken of his page in the *Almanach*. And he has a further advantage in his age; a man of thirty-three or thereabouts seems able to exercise a peculiar fascination over a girl of nineteen. Compared with him, Willoughby is only a boy—sound and handsome and promising, but a boy all the same. The poor girl has almost succumbed in the struggle. She frankly gave up and went to bed yesterday afternoon, and patient Rubino (in the absence of the American and English doctors, who are only beginning to return) has one more problem on his very busy hands.

George Bassett is strengthening slowly after his unfortunate overestimate of his powers; and Mr. Coggswell (who recently overestimated *his* in a personal chase Volterra-ward on the track of Luca della Robbia) is gradually recovering, and is able to eat a few simple things very carefully. But neither is markedly cheerful, and, in fact, the only capable and inspiriting person about the place—except the youngest footman—is John Egerton Thorpe.

Mr. Thorpe is very cheery and resourceful and is doing all he can to transform our hall of gloom into a house of mirth. I have learned that it was to him I stood indebted for my invitation to the garden-party at the Bagni. That, however, is a very slight obligation indeed if, as I am coming more and more to surmise, it is also to him that I am indebted for the shelter and comfort of this villa. Mrs. Starr, true, is very kindly; but could she be, I ask myself, an out-and-out angel on her own account?

This morning I was taking an hour upon the terrace, and pretty soon John Thorpe came lounging along to the chair where they had propped me up for the pleasant autumn sun and the reviving breeze from the sea. He looked me over in a slow, leisurely way—it almost amounted to an inspection. I stood it, assuming that he had earned the right.

"Well, well," he said presently; "to think that you should have fallen by the wayside, too! How do you explain it? Why did it happen?"

"I suppose I must have overestimated

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my powers, as others have done. *I'm* not cast-iron, either."

"But what were you really trying to do?"

"I presume I was trying to help America become the greatest ever. We need culture, and I was doing my best to cultivate myself, and to aid those who depend on me for instruction and guidance."

He gave me another long look and twisted his lips in a whimsical smile.

"Do you imagine you are the only one who is trying to make America the greatest ever? Others may be busy in the vast work, too, with as full a faith that it can be done, and as full a determination that it shall be done. Others are suffering in the cause; you are not the only martyr."

Well, Ella, I lay there and let him talk to me. He made out a pretty good case for the various people that I may have seemed to disparage so busily through this summer's correspondence, and I was perfectly willing to let him have his say. I was made to see that the culture I had pursued to my own undoing was but one element of many in a nation's greatness, and that other elements must not be overlooked.

I was told—by a man who appeared to believe what he was saying—that commercial dominance is one of these, and social splendor and distinction another, and the development of a high and noble spirit by means of youthful emulation a third; and that all these various objects, and others, might be followed up with as full a faith and as strong a conviction as any pursuits of my own. I was asked to perceive that a sort of financial centralization is necessary if we are to rule the world, and a higher degree of social finish and elegance if we are to assimilate ourselves satisfactorily to older societies; and I was instructed that youth, no less than love, helps to make the world go round, and that the generous and honorable competition of the young man with his fellows helps to keep this same old world sound and sweet. Ella, that "*insouciant*" and "skittish" Egerton Thorpe leaned over my chair and talked to me like a book for nearly an hour. Do you wonder that I have changed his name to John?

You will now perceive, perhaps, that it is not as a mere buccaneer of business that Leander Coggswell has imperilled his nerves, his digestion, and his reputation. No; he is a great opener-up of new fields and of new careers, a masterful unifier of the nation's forces in the modern warfare known as "trade." A man of such transcendent abilities must have adequate opportunities, if only for the satisfaction of his own nature and its powers; and he takes or makes such opportunities as the condition of his country offers.

You may even see that it is no mere personal ambition which has brought Mrs. Starr and Gladys to the point of nervous prostration as they hesitate between two international marriages, either of which, in the light of recent experiments, may be laden with peril and disaster. No; it is a high desire to bring American life into conformity with the best models exhibited by the Old World, and to cast glamour upon the simple civility of a virgin continent; and all the risks and penalties of this high emprise they willingly assume.

Nor is it any mere vainglorious ambition that has brought a likable young fellow within the shadow of permanent invalidism. Not at all. "Poor Geordie," as John Thorpe still calls the lad, was probably thinking far less of himself than of his college, his town, his native country. Theirs was to be the glory. All these are the views I have listened to today. They are plausible and ingenious and I hope, for my own comfort, that they may be taken as just and true.

No more for the present. I am improving daily. The sea air, the abundant sunlight, the best of care—these will soon make Philippa herself again. Another month will see me back at the Falls.

October 15.

Ella, I may as well blurt it out: John Thorpe has asked me to marry him. If he was fluent last Wednesday, in behalf of others, judge whether he was eloquent today on his own account! *Now* is the time to ask me: Are you better? are you worse? Really, I can't say! I shall merely declare that I am very badly confused and that the need of a general readjustment is pressing, indeed.

I had a long talk to-day with Mr. Coggswell—the first of any moment. He scaled his grand bulk down to my infinitesimal capacity and became as human as you please. He even told me, among other things, that he was a native of our town. I pointed out that his numerous biographies

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Drawn by James Montgomery Flagg.

He looked me over in a slow, leisurely way.—Page 443.

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—*mêmoires pour servir!*—were at variance with this statement. Then he qualified: he had been born on a farm *near* Stoneham Falls and been carried over into Fairfield County at the age of one. Think of Leander M. Coggswell at the age of one! He fell into reminiscences of his early days in the Naugatuck Valley; this return upon the past may mark—for him—the beginning of the end. He has conquered the metropolis and the country at large; now, I suppose, his career may be reviewed, with some justice, as a whole. We cannot have an omelette without breaking a few eggs; we cannot bring a vast new country under the plough without turning under, at the same time, a certain number of innocent flowers; nor can a man seat himself at the apex of an enormous fortune without the charge of many minor injustices from a chorus of outspoken enemies. The old gentleman—whom I at last view not as a sociological abstraction, but as a human creature like the rest of us—has probably had his beliefs and convictions, after all, and has in some degree suffered and sacrificed himself for them.

I was glad to have him purr on about the Falls. I asked him what he meant to do for his native town, and suggested the customary library. He has promised it. You shall have a new building to replace that shabby old wreck, and you shall also have a lot of good books to fill it. John Thorpe, furthermore, is desirous that I should give due heed, on the credit side, to the museum in the city itself. This, with its collections, will go to the public in the end, and the poor old invalid's earnest pursuit of Tuscan terra cottas must stand a proof of his desire to make his galleries—and his gifts—all the more complete.

Gladys, I think, understands the situation between John and me. She looks at me with great eyes, as if to say, "Oh, you happy woman, to have the question put before you so simply!" Yes, she and her mother are placing a joint oblation on the shining altar of social success; possibly they cherish the idea that, by some radical shifting of the poles, the social centre of gravity will be so altered that the newer generation may enjoy, in its mother's native seat, that distinction which she herself is now made to seek abroad.

One may even poetize a little the somewhat touching figure of Geordie Bassett. What was he, in fact, but another stout and generous youth going from Croton to contend at Olympia? What, indeed, are all of us but pilgrims from Magna Græcia to the elder country; candidates for the Violet Crown; runners fired with the ambition to hand on the torch, by one means or another, to the newer land where illumination is so needed and desired? I think I shall make this thought into a paper, though doubtless my teaching days are over.

John, who is sitting by, waiting for me to finish, says that the last call has come. He means that his uncle has a company out in Colorado, and that this company needs a secretary or treasurer, or something of the kind.

"What is the name of the town where we are going to live?" I ask him.

"I don't know—yet," he replies.

"Then I don't suppose you can tell whether it has a woman's club or not?"

"Hardly," he laughs. "Why?"

"Because if it hasn't got one, it soon will have. And I think I could give you the name of its first president."

"Do, by all means," he urges.

However, that bit of information I hold back from him for the present. But as I am not to see you for another month, I may tell you, confidentially, that the name of that distinguished official is quite likely to be

Yours very happily,

PHILIPPA.

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THE FRUIT OF THE TREE

BY EDITH WHARTON

ILLUSTRATION BY ALONZO KIMBALL

BOOK IV—(Continued)

XXXV

AMHERST, his back to the threshold, sat at a table, writing: Wyant stood a few feet away, staring down at the fire.

Neither had heard the door open; and before they were aware of her entrance, Justine had calculated that she must have been away for at least five minutes, and that in that space of time almost anything might have been said between them.

For a moment the power of connected thought left her; then her heart gave a bound of relief. She said to herself that Wyant had doubtless made some allusion to his situation, and that her husband, conscious only of a great debt of gratitude, had at once sat down to draw a cheque for him. The idea was so reassuring that her hopes revived.

Wyant was the first to see her. He made an abrupt movement, and Amherst, rising, turned and put an envelope in his hand.

"There, my dear fellow——"

As he turned he caught sight of his wife and came forward.

"I caught the twelve o'clock train after all—you got my second wire?"

"No," she faltered, pressing her left hand, with the little case in it, close to the folds of her dress.

"I was afraid not. There was a bad storm at Hanaford, and they said there might be a delay."

At the same moment she found Wyant advancing with extended hand, and realized that he had concealed the fact of having already seen her. She accepted the cue, and shook his hand, murmuring: "How do you do?"

Amherst looked at her, perhaps struck by her manner.

"You have not seen Dr. Wyant since Lynbrook?" he said in a low tone.

"No," she answered, thankful to have this pretext for her emotion.

"I have been telling him that he should not have left us so long without news—especially as he has been very ill, and things have gone rather badly with him. But I hope we can help now. He has heard that Saint Christopher's is looking for a house-physician for the paying patients' wing, and as Mr. Langhope is away I have given him a line to Mrs. Ansell."

"Extremely kind of you," Wyant murmured, passing his hand over his forehead.

Justine stood silent. She wondered that her husband had not noticed that tremulous degraded hand. But he was always so unheeding of externals—and he had no medical experience to sharpen his perceptions.

Suddenly she felt impelled to speak. "I am sorry Dr. Wyant has been—unfortunate. Of course you will want to do everything to help him; but would it not be better to wait till Mr. Langhope comes back?"

"Dr. Wyant thinks the delay might make him lose the place. It seems the board meets tomorrow. And Mrs. Ansell really knows much more about it. Isn't she the secretary of the ladies' committee?"

"I'm not sure—I believe so. But surely Mr. Langhope should be consulted."

She felt Wyant's face change: his eyes settled on her in a hard threatening stare.

Amherst looked at her also, and there was surprise in his glance. "I think I can answer for my father-in-law. He feels as strongly as I do how much we all owe to Dr. Wyant."

He seldom spoke of Mr. Langhope as his father-in-law; and the chance designation seemed to mark a closer tie between them, to exclude Justine from what was after all a family affair. For a moment she felt tempted to accept the suggestion, and let the

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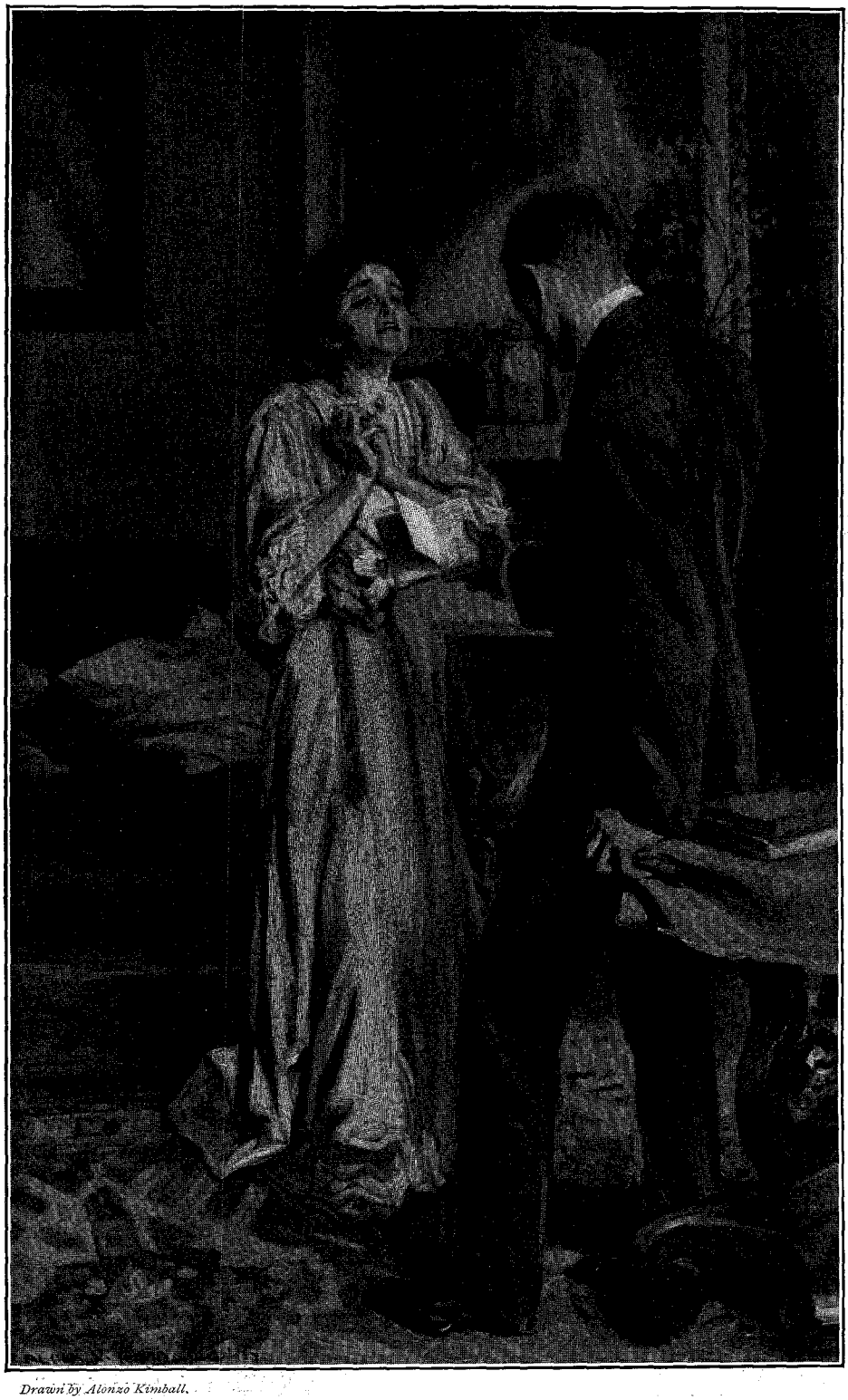

Drawn by Alonzo Kimball.

"There—read that. The book was at Lynbrook—in your room—and I came across it by chance the very day. . . ."—Page 452.

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responsibility fall where it would. But it would fall on Amherst—and that was intolerable.

"I think you ought to wait," she insisted.

An embarrassed silence fell upon the three.

Wyant broke it by advancing toward Amherst. "I shall never forget your kindness," he said; "and I hope to prove to Mrs. Amherst that it is not misplaced."

The words were well chosen, and well spoken; Justine saw that they produced a good effect. Amherst grasped the physician's hand with a smile. "My dear fellow, I would willingly do more. Be sure to call on me again if you want help."

"Oh, you've put me on my feet," said Wyant gratefully.

He bowed slightly to Justine and turned to go; but as he reached the threshold she moved after him.

"Dr. Wyant—you must give back that letter."

He stopped short with a whitening face.

She felt Amherst's eyes on her again; and she said desperately, addressing him: "Dr. Wyant understands my reasons."

Her husband's glance turned abruptly to Wyant. "Do you?" he asked after a pause.

Wyant looked from one to the other. The moisture came out on his forehead, and he passed his hand over it again. "Yes," he said in a dry voice. "Mrs. Amherst wants me farther off—out of New York."

"Out of New York? What do you mean?"

Justine interposed hastily, before the answer could come. "It is because Dr. Wyant is not in condition—for such a place—just at present."

"But Dr. Wyant assures me he is quite well."

There was another silence; and again Wyant broke in, this time with a slight laugh. "I can explain what Mrs. Amherst means; she intends to accuse me of the morphine habit. And I can explain her reason for doing so—she wants me out of the way."

Amherst turned on the speaker; and, as she had foreseen, his look was terrible. "You haven't explained that yet," he said.

"Well—I can." Wyant waited another moment. "I know too much about her," he declared.

There was a faint exclamation from Justine, and Amherst strode toward Wyant. "You infernal blackguard!" he cried out.

"Oh, gently——" Wyant muttered, flinching back from his outstretched arm.

"My wife's wish is sufficient. Give me back that letter."

Wyant straightened himself. "No, by God, I won't!" he retorted furiously. "I didn't ask you for it till you offered to help me; but I won't let it be taken back without a word, like a thief that you'd caught with your umbrella. If your wife won't explain I will. She's afraid I'll talk about what happened at Lynbrook."

Amherst's arm fell to his side. "At Lynbrook?"

Behind him there was a sound of inarticulate appeal—but he took no notice.

"Yes. It's she who used morphia—but not on herself. She gives it to other people. She gave an overdose to Mrs. Amherst."

Amherst looked at him confusedly. "An overdose?"

"Yes—purposely, I mean. And I came into the room at the wrong time. I can prove that Mrs. Amherst died of morphia-poisoning."

"John!" Justine gasped out, pressing between them.

Amherst gently put aside the hand with which she had caught his arm. "Wait a moment: this can't rest here. You can't want it to," he said in an undertone.

"Why do you care . . . for what he says . . . when I don't?" she breathed back with trembling lips.

"You can see I am not wanted here," Wyant threw in with a sneer.

Amherst remained silent for a moment; then he turned his eyes once more to his wife.

Justine lifted her face: it looked small and spent, like an extinguished taper.

"It's true," she said.

"True?"

"I *did* give . . . an overdose . . . intentionally . . . when I knew there was no hope, and when the surgeons said she might go on suffering for weeks. She was very strong . . . and I couldn't bear it . . . you couldn't have borne it. . . ."

There was another silence; then she went on in a stronger voice, looking straight at her husband: "And now will you send this man away?"

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"Yes," said Amherst. He glanced at Wyant without moving. "Go," he said.

Wyant, instead, moved a step nearer. "Just a minute, please. It's only fair to hear my side. Your wife says there was no hope; yet the day before she . . . gave the dose, Dr. Garford told her in my presence that Mrs. Amherst might live."

Again Amherst's eyes addressed themselves slowly to Justine; and she forced her lips to articulate an answer.

"Dr. Garford said . . . one could never tell . . . but I know he didn't believe in the chance of recovery . . . no one did. . . ."

"Dr. Garford is dead," said Wyant grimly.

Amherst strode up to him again. "You scoundrel—leave the house!" he commanded.

But still Wyant stood his ground. "Not till I've finished. I can't afford to let myself be kicked out like a dog because I happen to be in the way. Every doctor knows that, in cases of spinal lesion, recovery is becoming more and more frequent—if the patient survives the third week there's every reason to hope. Those are the facts as they would appear to any surgeon. If they're not true, why is Mrs. Amherst afraid of having them stated? Why has she been paying me for nearly a year to keep them quiet?"

"Oh——" Justine moaned.

"I never thought of talking till luck went against me. Then I asked her for help—and reminded her of certain things. After that she kept me supplied pretty regularly." He thrust his shaking hand into an inner pocket. "Here are her envelopes . . . Quebec . . . Montreal . . . Saranac . . . I know just where you went on your honeymoon. She had to write often, because the sums were small. Why did she do it, if she wasn't afraid? And why did she go upstairs just now to fetch me something? If you don't believe me, ask her what she's got in her hand."

Amherst did not heed this injunction. He stood motionless, gripping the back of a chair, as if his next gesture might be to lift and hurl it at the speaker.

"Ask her——" Wyant repeated.

Amherst turned his head slowly, and his dull gaze rested on his wife. His face looked years older—lips and eyes moved as heavily as an old man's.

As he looked at her, Justine moved forward without speaking, and laid the little morocco case in his hand. He held it there a moment, as if hardly understanding her action—then he tossed it on the table at his elbow, and walked up to Wyant.

"You hound," he said—"now go!"

XXXVI

When Wyant had left the room, and the house-door had closed on him, Amherst spoke to his wife.

"Come upstairs," he said.

Justine followed him, scarcely conscious where she went, but moving already with a lighter tread. Part of her weight of misery had been lifted with Wyant's going. She had suffered less from the fear of what her husband might think than from the shame of making her avowal in her defamer's presence. And her faith in Amherst's comprehension had begun to revive. He had dismissed Wyant with scorn and horror—did not that show that he was on her side already? And how many more arguments she had at her call! Her brain hummed with them as she followed him up the stairs.

In her bedroom, he closed the door and stood motionless, the same heavy half-paralyzed look on his face. It frightened her and she went up to him.

"John!" she said timidly.

He put his hand to his head. "Wait a moment——" he said; and she waited, her heart sinking again.

The moment over, he seemed to recover his power of movement. He crossed the room and threw himself into the armchair near the hearth.

"Now tell me everything," he said.

He sat thrown back, his eyes fixed on the fire, and the vertical line between his brows forming a deep scar in his white face.

Justine moved nearer, and touched his arm beseechingly. "Won't you look at me?"

He turned his head slowly, as if with an effort, and his eyes rested reluctantly on hers.

"Oh, not like that——"

He seemed to make a stronger effort at self-control. "Please don't heed me—but say what there is to say," he said in a level voice, his gaze again on the fire.

She stood before him, her arms hanging down, her clasped fingers twisting restlessly.

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"I don't know that there is much to say —beyond what I have told you."

There was a slight sound in Amherst's throat, like the ghost of a derisive laugh. After another interval he said: "I wish to hear the exact circumstances."

She seated herself on the edge of a chair near by, bending forward, with hands interlocked and arms extended on her knees—every line reaching out to him, as though her slight body were an arrow winged with pleadings. It was a relief to speak at last, even face to face with the stony image that sat in her husband's place; and she told her story, detail by detail, omitting nothing, exaggerating nothing, speaking slowly, clearly, with precision, aware that the bare facts were her strongest argument.

Amherst, as he listened, shifted his position once, raising his hand so that it screened his face; and in that attitude he remained when she had ended.

As she waited for him to speak, Justine realized that her heart had been alive with tremulous hopes. All through her narrative she had counted on a murmur of perception, an exclamation of pity: she had felt sure of melting the image. But Amherst said no word.

At length he spoke, still without turning his head. "You have not told me why you kept this from me."

A sob formed in her throat, and she had to wait to steady her voice.

"No—that was my wrong—my weakness. When I did it I never thought of being afraid to tell you—I had talked it over with you in my own mind . . . so often . . . before. . . ."

"Well?"

"Then—when you came back . . . it was harder . . . though I was still sure you would approve me. . . ."

"Why harder?"

"Because at first—at Lynbrook—I *could not* tell it all over, in detail, as I have now . . . it was beyond human power . . . and without doing so, I could not make it all clear to you . . . and so should only have added to your pain. If you had been there you would have done as I did. . . . I felt sure of that from the first. But coming afterward, you couldn't judge . . . no one who was not there could judge . . . and I wanted to spare you. . . ."

"And afterward?"

She had shrunk in advance from this question, and she could not answer it at once. To gain time she echoed it. "Afterward?"

"Did it never occur to you, when we met later—when you first went to Mr. Langhope——?"

"To tell you then? No—because by that time I had come to see that I could never be quite sure of making you understand. No one who was not there could know what it was to see her suffer."

"You thought it all over, then—decided definitely against telling me?"

"I did not have to think long. I felt I had done right—I still feel so—and I was sure you would feel so, if you were in the same circumstances."

There was another pause. Then Amherst said: "And last September—at Hanaford?"

It was the word for which she had waited —the word of her inmost fears. She felt the blood mount to her face.

"Did you see no difference—no special reason for telling me then?" he went on.

"Yes——" she faltered.

"Yet you said nothing."

"No."

Silence again. Her eyes strayed to the clock, and some dim association of ideas told her that Cicely would soon be coming in.

"Why did you say nothing?"

He lowered his hand and turned toward her as he spoke; and she looked up and faced him.

"Because I regarded the question as settled. I had decided it in my own mind months before, and had never regretted my decision. I should have thought it morbid . . . unnatural . . . to go over the whole subject again . . . to let it affect a situation that had come about . . . so much later . . . so unexpectedly. . . ."

"Did you never feel that, later, if I came to know—if others came to know—it might be difficult——?"

"No; for I didn't care for the others—and I believed that, whatever your own feelings were, you would know I had done what I thought right."

She spoke the words nobly, proudly, and for the first time the hard lines of his face relaxed, and a slight tremor crossed it.

"If you believed this, why have you been letting that cur blackmail you?"

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"Because when he began I saw for the first time that what I had done might be turned against me by—by those who disliked your marriage. And I grew afraid for my happiness. That was my weakness . . . it is what I am suffering for now. . . ."

"*Suffering!*" he echoed bitterly, as though she had presumed to apply to herself a word of which he had the grim monopoly. He rose and took a few aimless steps; then he halted before her.

"That day—last month—when you asked me for money . . . was it . . .?"

"Yes——" she said, her head sinking.

He laughed. "You couldn't tell me—but you could use my money to bribe that fellow to conspire with you!"

"I had none of my own. . . ."

"No—nor I either! You used *her* money.—God!" he groaned, turning away with clenched hands.

Justine had risen also, and she stood motionless, her hands clasped against her breast, in the drawn shrinking attitude of a fugitive suddenly overtaken by a blinding storm. He moved back to her with an appealing gesture.

"And you didn't see—it didn't occur to you—that your doing . . . what you did . . . was an obstacle—an insurmountable obstacle—to our ever . . .?"

She cut him short with an indignant cry. "No! No! for it was *not*. How could it have anything to do with what . . . came after . . . with you or me? I did it only for Bessy . . . it concerned only Bessy!"

"Ah, don't name her!" broke from him violently; and she drew back, cut to the heart.

There was another pause, during which he seemed to fall into a kind of dazed irresolution, his head on his breast, as though unconscious of her presence. Then he roused himself and went toward the door.

As he passed her she sprang after him. "John—John! Is that all you have to say?"

"What more is there?"

"What more? Everything!—What right have you to turn from me as if I were a murderess? I did nothing but what your own reason, your own arguments, have justified a hundred times! I made a mistake in not telling you at once—but a mistake is not a crime. It can't be your real feeling that turns you from me—it must be the dread of what other people would think! But when have you cared for what other people thought? When have your own actions been governed by it?"

He moved another step without speaking, and she caught him by the arm. "No! you sha'n't go—not like that!—Wait!"

She turned and crossed the room. On the lower shelf of the little table by her bed a few books were ranged: she stooped and drew one hurriedly forth, opening it at the fly-leaf as she went back to Amherst.

"There—read that. The book was at Lynbrook—in your room—and I came across it by chance the very day. . . ."

It was the little volume of Bacon which she was thrusting at him. He took it with a bewildered look, as if scarcely following what she said.

"Read it—read it!" she commanded; and mechanically he read out the words he had written.

"*La vraie morale se moque de la morale. . . . We perish because we follow other men's examples. . . . Socrates called the opinions of the many Lamiæ.*—Good God!" he exclaimed, flinging the book from him with a gesture of abhorrence.

Justine watched him with panting lips, her knees trembling under her. "But you wrote it—you wrote it! I thought you meant it!" she cried, as the book spun across a table and dropped to the floor beyond.

He looked at her coldly, almost apprehensively, as if she had grown suddenly dangerous and remote; then he turned and walked out of the room.

The striking of the clock roused her. She rose to her feet, rang the bell, and told the maid, through the door, that she had a headache, and was unable to see Miss Cicely. Then she turned back into the room, and darkness closed on her. She was not the kind to take grief passively—it drove her in anguished pacings up and down the floor. She walked and walked till her legs flagged under her; then she dropped stupidly into the chair where Amherst had sat. . . .

All her world had crumbled about her. It was as if some law of mental gravity had been mysteriously suspended, and every firmly-anchored conviction, every accepted process of reasoning, spun disconnectedly through space. Amherst had not understood her—worse still, he had judged her as

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the world might judge her! The core of her misery was there. With terrible clearness, she saw the suspicion that had crossed his mind—the suspicion that she had kept silence in the beginning because she loved him, and feared to lose him if she spoke.

And what if it were true? What if her unconscious guilt went back even farther than his thought dared track it? She could not now recall a time when she had not loved him. Every chance meeting with him, from their first brief talk at Hanaford, stood out embossed and glowing against the blur of lesser memories. Was it possible that she had loved him during Bessy's life—that she had even, sub-consciously, blindly, been urged by her feeling for him to perform the act?

But she shook herself free from this morbid horror—the rebound of health was always prompt in her, and her mind instinctively rejected every form of moral poison. No! Her motive had been normal, sane and justifiable—completely justifiable. Her fault lay in having dared to rise above conventional restrictions, her mistake in believing that her husband could rise with her. These reflections steadied her, but they did not bring much comfort. For her whole life was centred in Amherst, and she saw that he would never be able to free himself from the traditional view of her act. In looking back, and correcting her survey of his character in the revealing light of the last hours, she perceived that, like many men of emancipated thought, he had remained subject to the old conventions of feeling. And he had probably never given much thought to women till he met her—had always been content to deal with them in the accepted currency of sentiment. After all, it was the currency they liked best, and for which they offered their prettiest wares!

But what of the intellectual accord between himself and her? She had not been deceived in that! He and she had really been wedded in mind as well as in heart. But until now there had not arisen in their lives one of those searching questions which call into play emotions rooted far below reason and judgment, in the dark primal depths of inherited feeling. It is easy to judge impersonal problems intellectually, turning on them the full light of acquired knowledge; but too often one must still grope one's way through the personal difficulty by the dim taper carried in long-dead hands. . . .

But was there then no hope of lifting one's individual life to a clearer height of conduct? Must one be content to think for the race, and to feel only—feel blindly and incoherently—for one's self? And was it not from such natures as Amherst's—natures in which independence of judgment was blent with strong human sympathy—that the liberating impulse should come?

Her mind grew weary of revolving in this vain circle of questions. The fact was that, in their particular case, Amherst had not risen above prejudice and emotion; that, though her act was one to which his intellectual sanction was given, he had turned from her with instinctive repugnance, had dishonoured her by the most wounding suspicions. The tie between them was forever stained and debased.

Justine's long hospital-discipline made it impossible for her to lose consciousness of the lapse of time, or to let her misery thicken into mental stupor. She could not help thinking and moving; and she presently lifted herself to her feet, turned on the light, and began to prepare for dinner. It would be terrible to face her husband across Mr. Langhope's pretty dinner-table, and afterward in the charming drawing-room, with its delicate old ornaments and intimate luxurious furniture; but she could not continue to sit motionless in the dark: it was her innermost instinct to pick herself up and go on.

While she dressed, she listened anxiously for Amherst's step in the next room; but there was no sound, and when she dragged herself downstairs the drawing-room was empty, and the parlour-maid, after a decent delay, came to ask if dinner should be postponed.

She said no, murmuring some vague pretext for her husband's absence, and sitting alone through the succession of courses which composed the brief but carefully-studied *menu*. When this ordeal was over she returned to the drawing-room, and took up a book. It chanced to be a new volume on labour problems, which Amherst must have brought back with him; and it carried her thoughts instantly to Westmore. Would this disaster poison their work at the mills as well as their personal relation? Would

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he think of her as carrying contamination even into the task their love had illumined?

The hours went on without his returning, and at length it occurred to her that he might have taken the night train to Hanaford. Her heart contracted at the thought: she remembered—though every nerve shrank from the analogy—his sudden flight at another crisis in his life, and she felt obscurely that if he escaped from her now she would never recover her hold on him. But could he be so cruel—could he wish any one to suffer as she was suffering?

At ten o'clock she could endure the drawing-room no longer, and went up to her room again. She undressed slowly, trying to prolong the process as much as possible, to put off the period of silence and inaction which would close in on her when she lay down on her bed. But at length the dreaded moment came—there was nothing more between her and the night. She crept into bed and put out the light; but as she slipped between the cold sheets a trembling seized her, and after a moment she drew on her dressing-gown again and groped her way to the lounge by the fire.

She pushed the lounge closer to the hearth and lay down, still shivering, though she had drawn the quilted coverlet up to her chin. She lay there a long time, with closed eyes, in a mental darkness torn by sudden flashes of memory. In one of these flashes a phrase of Amherst's stood out—a word spoken at Westmore, on the day of the opening of the Emergency Hospital, about a good-looking young man who had called to see her. She remembered Amherst's boyish burst of jealousy, his sudden relief at the thought that the visitor might have been Wyant. And no doubt it *was* Wyant—Wyant who had come to Hanaford to threaten her, and who, baffled by her non-arrival, or for some other unexplained reason, had left again without carrying out his purpose.

It was dreadful to think by how slight a chance her first draught of happiness had escaped that drop of poison; yet when she realized it, her inward cry was: "If it had happened, my dearest need not have suffered!" . . . Already she was feeling Amherst's pain more than her own, understanding that it was harder to bear than hers because it was at war with all the reflective part of his nature.

As she lay there, her face pressed into the cushions, she heard a sound through the silent house—the opening and closing of the outer door. She turned cold, and lay listening with strained ears. . . . Yes; now there was a step on the stairs—her husband's step! She heard him turn into his own room. The throbs of her heart almost deafened her—she only distinguished, confusedly, that he was moving about within, so close to her that it was as if she felt his touch. And then her door opened, and he entered.

He stumbled slightly in the darkness before he found the switch of the lamp on the writing-table; and as he bent over it she saw that his face was flushed, and that his eyes had a strange excited light which, in any one less abstemious, might almost have suggested a recourse to stimulants.

"Are you awake?" he asked.

She started up against the cushions, her black hair streaming about her small ghostly face.

"Yes."

He walked over to the lounge and dropped into the low chair beside it.

"I've given that cur a lesson he won't forget," he exclaimed, breathing hard, the redness deepening in his face.

She turned on him in joy and trembling. "John!—Oh, John! You didn't follow him? Oh, what happened? What have you done?" she gasped.

"No. I didn't follow him. But there are some things that even the powers above can't stand. And so they managed to let me run across him—by the purest accident—and I gave him something to remember."

He spoke in a strong clear voice, that had a brightness like the brightness in his eyes. She felt its heat in her veins—the primitive woman in her glowed at contact with the primitive man. But reflection chilled her the next moment.

"But why—why? Oh, how could you? Where did it happen—oh, not in the street?"

As she questioned him, there rose before her the terrified vision of a crowd gathering—the police, newspapers, a hideous publicity. He must have been mad to do it—and yet he must have done it because he loved her!

"No—no. Don't be afraid. The powers looked after that too. There was no

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one about—and I don't think he'll talk much about it."

She trembled, fearing yet adoring him. Nothing could have been more unlike the Amherst she had fancied she knew, than this act of irrational anger which had magically lifted the darkness from his spirit; yet, magically also, it gave him back to her, made them one flesh once more. And suddenly the pressure of opposed emotions became too strong, and she burst into tears.

She wept painfully, violently, with the resistance of strong natures unused to emotional expression; till at length, through the tumult that possessed her, she felt her husband's quieting touch.

"Justine," he said, speaking once more in his natural voice.

She raised her face from her hands, and their eyes met.

"Justine—this afternoon—I said things I did not mean to say. . . ."

Her lips parted, but her throat was still full of sobs, and she could only look at him while the tears ran down.

"I believe I understand now. . ." he continued, in the same quiet tone.

Her hand shrank from his clasp, and she began to tremble again. "Oh, if you only *believe* . . . if you're not sure . . . don't pretend to be. . . ."

He sat down beside her on the lounge and drew her into his arms. "I am sure," he whispered, holding her close, and pressing his lips against her face and hair.

"Oh, my husband—my husband! You've come back to me?"

He answered her with more kisses, murmuring through them: "Poor child—poor child—poor Justine. . . ."

With her face against him she yielded to the childish luxury of murmuring out unjustified fears. "I was afraid you had gone back to Hanaford. . . ."

"Tonight? To Hanaford?"

"To tell your mother. . . ."

She felt a sudden contraction of the arm embracing her, as though a throb of pain had stiffened it.

"I shall never tell any one," he said abruptly; but as he felt in her a responsive shrinking he gathered her close again, whispering through the hair that fell about her cheek: "Don't talk, dear . . . let us never talk of it. . . ." And in the clasp of his arms her terror and anguish subsided, giving way, not to the deep peace of tranquillized thought, but to a confused well-being that lulled all thought to sleep.

XXXVII

But thought could never be long silent between them; and Justine's triumph lasted but a day.

With its end she saw what it had been made of: the ascendency of youth and sex over his subjugated judgment. Her first impulse was to try and maintain it—why not use the protective arts with which love inspired her? She who lived so keenly in the brain could live as intensely in her feelings; her quick imagination tutored her looks and words, taught her the spells to weave about shorn giants. And for a few days she and Amherst lost themselves in this self-evoked cloud of passion, both clinging fast to the visible, the papable in their relation, as if conscious already that its finer essence had fled.

Amherst made no allusion to what had passed, asked for no details, offered no reassurances—behaved as if the whole episode had been effaced from his mind. And from Wyant there came no sound: he seemed to have disappeared from life as he had from their talk.

Toward the end of the week, Amherst announced that he must return to Hanaford; and Justine at once declared her intention of going with him.

He seemed surprised, disconcerted almost; and for the first time the shadow of what had happened fell visibly between them.

"But ought you to leave Cicely before Mr. Langhope comes back?" he suggested.

"He will be here in two days."

"But he will expect to find you."

"It is almost the first of April. We are to have Cicely with us for the summer. There is no reason why I should not go back to my work at Westmore."

There was in fact no reason that he could produce; and on the morrow they returned to Hanaford together.

With her perceptions strung to the last pitch of sensitiveness, she felt a change in Amherst as soon as they re-entered Bessy's house. He was still scrupulously considerate, almost too scrupulously tender; but

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with an undertone of lassitude, like a man who tries to maintain his habitual bearing under the stupefying approach of illness. And she began to hate the power by which she held him. It was not thus they had once walked together, free in mind though so linked in habit and feeling; when their love was not a deadening drug, but a vivifying element that cleared thought instead of stifling it. There were moments when she felt that open alienation would be easier to bear, because it would be nearer the truth. And at such moments she longed to speak, to beg him to utter his mind, to go with her once for all into the depths of the subject they continued tacitly to avoid. But at the last her heart always failed her: she could not face the thought of losing him, of hearing him speak estranging words to her.

They had been at Hanaford for about ten days when, one morning at breakfast, Amherst uttered a sudden exclamation over a letter he was reading.

"What is it?" she asked, in a tremor.

He had grown very pale, and was pushing the hair from his forehead with the nervous gesture habitual to him in moments of painful indecision.

"What is it?" she repeated, her fear growing.

"Nothing——" he began, thrusting the letter under the pile of envelopes by his plate and taking up his fork again; but she continued to look at him anxiously, imploringly, till she drew his eyes to hers.

"Mr. Langhope writes that they've appointed Wyant to Saint Christopher's," he said abruptly.

"Oh, the letter—we forgot the letter!" she cried.

"Yes—we forgot the letter."

"But how dare he——?"

Amherst said nothing, but the silence between them seemed full of ironic answers, till she brought out, hardly above her breath: "What shall you do?"

"Write at once—tell Mr. Langhope he's not fit for the place."

"Of course——" she murmured.

He went on tearing open his other letters, and glancing at their contents. She leaned back in her chair, her cup of coffee untasted, listening to the recurrent crackle of torn paper as he tossed aside one letter after another.

Presently he rose from his seat, and as she followed him from the dining-room she noticed that his breakfast had also remained untasted. He gathered up his letters and walked toward the smoking-room; and after a moment's hesitation she joined him.

"John," she said, from the threshold.

He was just seating himself at his desk, but he turned to her with an obvious effort at kindness which made the set look of his face the more noticeable.

She closed the door and went up to him.

"If you write that to Mr. Langhope—Dr. Wyant will—will tell him," she said.

"Yes—we must be prepared for that."

She was silent, and Amherst flung himself down on the leather ottoman against the wall. She stood before him, clasping and unclasping her hands in speechless distress.

"What would you have me do?" he asked at length, almost irritably.

"I only thought . . . he told me he would keep straight . . . if he only had a chance," she faltered.

Amherst lifted his head slowly, and looked at her. "You mean—I am to do nothing? Is that it?"

She moved nearer to him with wide beseeching eyes. "I can't bear it . . . I can't bear that others should come between us," she broke out passionately.

He made no answer, but she could see a look of distress cross his face, and coming still closer, she sank down on the ottoman, laying her hand on his. "John . . . oh, John, spare me . . ." she whispered.

For a moment his hand lay passive under hers; then he drew it out, and enclosed her trembling fingers.

"Very well—I'll give him a chance—I'll do nothing," he said, suddenly putting his other arm about her.

The reaction caught her by the throat, forcing out a dry sob or two; and as she pressed her face against him, he raised it up and gently kissed her.

But even as their lips met she felt that they were sealing a treaty with dishonour. That his kiss should come to mean that to her! It was unbearable—worse than any personal pain—the thought of dragging him down to falsehood through her weakness.

She drew back and rose to her feet, putting aside his detaining hand.

"No—no! What am I saying? It can't

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be—you must tell the truth." Her voice gathered strength as she spoke. "Oh, forget what I said—I didn't mean it!"

But again he seemed sunk in inaction, like a man over whom some baneful lethargy is stealing.

"John—John—forget what I said!" she repeated urgently.

He looked up at her. "You realize what it will mean?"

"Yes—I realize. . . . But it must be. . . . And it will make no difference between us . . . will it?"

"No—no. Why should it?" he answered apathetically.

"Then write—tell Mr. Langhope not to give him the place. I want it over."

He rose slowly to his feet, without looking at her again, and walked over to the desk. She sank down on the ottoman and watched him with burning eyes while he drew forth a sheet of note-paper and began to write.

But after he had written a few words he laid down his pen, and swung his chair about so that he faced her.

"I can't do it in this way," he exclaimed.

"How then? What do you mean?" she said, starting up.

He looked at her. "Do you want the story to come from Wyant?" he asked.

"Oh——" She began to tremble again. "You mean to tell Mr. Langhope yourself?"

"Yes. I mean to take the next train to town and tell him."

The trembling increased so much that she had to rest her hands against the edge of the ottoman to steady herself. "But if . . . if after all . . . Wyant should not speak?"

"Well—if he shouldn't? Could you bear to owe our safety to *him?*"

"Safety!"

"It comes to that, doesn't it, if *we're* afraid to speak?"

She sat silent, letting the truth of this sink into her till its bitter strength poured courage into her veins.

"Yes—it comes to that," she confessed.

"Then you feel as I do?"

"That you must go——?"

"That this is intolerable!"

The words struck down her last illusion, and she rose and went over to the writing-table. "Yes—go," she said.

He stood up also, and took both her hands, not in a caress, but gravely, almost severely.

"Listen, Justine. You must realize exactly what this means—may mean. I am willing to go on as we are now . . . as long as we can . . . because I love you . . . because I would do anything to spare you pain. But if I speak I must say everything—I must follow this thing up to its uttermost consequences. That's what I want to make clear to you."

Her heart sank again with a foreboding of new peril. "What consequences?"

"Can't you see for yourself—when you look about this house?"

"This house——?"

He dropped her hands and took an abrupt turn across the room.

"I owe everything to her," he broke out, "all I am, all I have, all I have been able to give you—and I must go and tell her father that you. . . ."

"Stop—stop!" she cried, lifting her hands as if to keep off a blow.

"No—don't make me stop. We must face it," he said doggedly.

"But this—this isn't the truth! You put it as if—almost as if——"

"Yes—don't finish.—Has it occurred to you that *he* may think that?" Amherst said with a terrible laugh.

But at that she recovered her native courage, as she was apt to do when an extreme call was made on it.

"No—I don't believe it! If he *does*, it will be because you think it yourself. . . ." Her voice sank, and she lifted her hands and pressed them to her temples. "And if you think it, nothing matters . . . one way or the other. . . ." She paused, and her voice regained its strength. "That is what *I* must face before you go: what you think, what you believe of me. You've never told me that," she said with sudden energy.

Amherst, at the challenge, remained silent, while a slow red crept to his cheek-bones.

"Haven't I told you by—by what I've done?" he said slowly.

"No—what you've done has covered up what you thought; and I've helped you cover it—I'm to blame too! But it was not for this that we . . . that we had that half year together . . . not to sink into connivance and evasion! I don't want another hour of stolen happiness. I want the truth from you, whatever it is."

He stood motionless, staring moodily at

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the floor. "Don't you see that's my misery . . . that I don't know myself?"

"You don't know . . . what you think of me?"

"Good God, Justine, why do you try to strip life naked? I don't know what's been going on in me these last weeks——"

"You must know what you think of my motive . . . for doing what I did. . . ."

She saw in his face how he shrank from the least allusion to the act about which their torment revolved. But he forced himself to raise his head and look at her. "I have never—for one moment—questioned your motive—or failed to see that it was justified . . . under the circumstances. . . ."

"Oh, John—John!" she broke out, in the wild joy of hearing herself absolved; but the next instant her subtle perceptions felt the unconscious reserve under his admission.

"Your mind justifies me—not your heart; isn't *that* your misery?" she said.

He looked at her almost piteously, as if, in the last resort, it was from her that light must come to him. "On my soul, I don't know . . . I can't tell . . . it's all dark in me. I know you did what you thought best . . . if I had been there, I believe I should have asked you to do it . . . but I wish to God. . . ."

She interrupted him sobbingly. "Oh, I ought never to have let you love me! I ought to have seen that I was cut off from you forever. I have brought you wretchedness when I would have given my life for you! I don't deserve that you should forgive me for that."

Her sudden outbreak seemed to restore his self-possession. He went up to her and took her hand with a quieting touch.

"There is no question of forgiveness, Justine. Don't let us torture each other with vain repinings. Our business is to face the thing, and we shall be better for having talked it out fully. I shall be better, for my part, for having told Mr. Langhope. But before I go, I want to be sure that you understand the view he may take . . . and the effect it will probably have on our future."

"Our future?" She started. "No, I don't understand."

Amherst paused a moment, as if trying to choose the words least likely to pain her. "Mr. Langhope knows that my marriage was . . . unhappy; through my fault, he no doubt thinks. And if he chooses to infer that . . . that you and I may have cared for each other . . . before . . . and that it was *because* there was a chance of recovery that you——"

"Oh——"

"We must face it," he repeated inflexibly. "And you must understand that, if there is the faintest hint of this kind, I shall give up everything here, as soon as it can be settled legally—God, how Tredegar will like the job!—and you and I will have to go and begin life over again . . . somewhere else."

For an instant a mad hope swelled in her breast—the vision of escaping with him into new scenes, a new life, away from the coil of memories that bound them down as in a net. But the reaction of reason came at once—she saw him cut off from his chosen work, his career destroyed, his honour clouded, above all—ah, this was what wrung them both!—his task undone, his people flung back to the depths he had lifted them from. And all through her doing—all because she had clutched at happiness with too rash a hand! The thought stung her to passionate activity of mind—made her resolve to risk anything, dare anything, before she involved him farther in her own ruin. She felt her brain clear gradually, and the thickness dissolve in her throat.

"I understand," she said in a low voice, raising her eyes to his.

"And you're ready to accept the consequences? Think again before it's too late."

She paused. "That is what I should like . . . what I wanted to ask you . . . the time to think."

She saw a slight shade cross his face, as if he had not expected this failure of courage in her; but he said quietly: "You don't wish me to go today?"

"Not today—give me one more day."

"Very well."

She laid a timid hand on his arm. "Please go out to Westmore as usual—as if nothing had happened. And tonight . . . when you come back . . . I shall have decided."

"Very well," he repeated.

"You'll be gone all day?"

He glanced at his watch. "Yes—I had meant to be; unless——"

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"No; I would rather be alone. Good-bye," she said, letting her hand slip softly along his coat-sleeve as he turned to the door.

XXXVIII

At half-past six that afternoon, just as Amherst, on his return from the mills, put the key into his door at Hanaford, Mrs. Ansell, in New York, was being shown into Mr. Langhope's library.

As she entered, her friend rose from his chair by the fire, and turned on her a face so disordered by emotion that she stopped short with an exclamation of alarm.

"Henry—what has happened? Why did you send for me?"

"Because I couldn't go to you. I couldn't trust myself in the streets—in the light of day."

"But why? What is it?—Not Cicely——?"

He struck both hands upward with a comprehensive gesture. "Cicely—every one—the whole world!" His clenched fist came down on the table against which he was leaning. "Maria, my girl might have been saved!"

Mrs. Ansell looked at him with growing disturbance. "Saved—Bessy's life? But how? By whom?"

"She might have been allowed to live, I mean—to recover. She was killed, Maria; that woman killed her!"

Mrs. Ansell, with another cry of bewilderment, let herself drop helplessly into the nearest chair. "In heaven's name, Henry—what woman?"

He seated himself opposite to her, clutching at his stick, and leaning his weight heavily on it—a white dishevelled old man. "I wonder why you ask—just to spare me?"

Their eyes met in a piercing exchange of question and answer, and Mrs. Ansell tried to bring out reasonably: "I ask in order to understand what you are saying."

"Well, then, if you insist on keeping up appearances—my daughter-in-law killed my daughter. There you have it." He laughed silently, with a tear on his reddened eye-lids.

Mrs. Ansell groaned. "Henry, you are raving—I understand less and less."

"I don't see how I can speak more plainly. She told me so herself, in this room, not an hour ago."

"She told you? Who told you?"

"John Amherst's wife. Told me she'd killed my child. It's as easy as breathing—if you know how to use a morphia-needle."

Light seemed at last to break on his hearer. "Oh, my poor Henry—you mean—she gave too much? There was some dreadful accident?"

"There was no accident. She killed my child—killed her deliberately. Don't look at me as if I were a madman. She sat in that chair you're in when she told me."

"Justine? Has she been here today?" Mrs. Ansell paused in a painful effort to readjust her thoughts. "But *why* did she tell you?"

"That's simple enough. To prevent Wyant's doing it."

"Oh—" broke from his hearer, in a long sigh of fear and intelligence. Mr. Langhope looked at her with a smile of miserable exultation.

"You knew—you suspected all along?—But now you must speak out!" he exclaimed with a sudden note of command.

She sat motionless, as if trying to collect herself. "I know nothing—I only meant—why was this never known before?"

He was upon her at once. "You think—because they understood each other? And now there's been a break between them? He wanted too big a share of the spoils? Oh, it's all so abysmally vile!"

He covered his face with a shaking hand, and Mrs. Ansell remained silent, plunged in a speechless misery of conjecture. At length she regained some measure of her habitual composure, and leaning forward, with her eyes gravely bent on his face, said in a quiet tone: "If I am to help you, you must try to tell me just what has happened."

He made an impatient gesture. "Haven't I told you? She found that her accomplice meant to speak, and rushed to town to forestall him."

Mrs. Ansell reflected. "But why—with his place at Saint Christopher's secured—did Dr. Wyant choose this time to threaten her—if, as you imagine, he's an accomplice?"

"Because he is a drug-taker, and she didn't wish him to have the place."

"She didn't wish it? But that does not look as if she were afraid. She had only to hold her tongue!"

Mr. Langhope laughed sardonically.

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"It's not quite so simple. Amherst was coming to town to tell me."

"Ah—*he* knows?"

"Yes—and she preferred that I should have her version first."

"And what is her version?"

The furrows of pain deepened in Mr. Langhope's face. "Maria—don't ask too much of me! I can't go over it again. She says she wanted to spare my child—she says the doctors were keeping her alive, torturing her uselessly, as a . . . a sort of scientific experiment. . . . She forced on me the hideous details. . . ."

Mrs. Ansell waited a moment.

"Well! May it not be true?"

"Wyant's version is different. *He* says Bessy would have recovered—he says Garford thought so too."

"And what does she answer? She denies it?"

"No. She admits that Garford was in doubt. But she says the chance was too remote—the pain too bad . . . that's her cue, naturally!"

Mrs. Ansell, leaning back in her chair, with hands meditatively stretched along its arms, gave herself up to silent consideration of the fragmentary statements cast before her. The long habit of ministering to her friends in moments of perplexity and distress had given her an almost judicial keenness in disentangling and coördinating facts incoherently presented, and in seizing upon the thread of motive that connected them; but she had never before been confronted with a situation so poignant in itself, and bearing so intimately on her personal feelings; and she needed time to free her thoughts from the impending rush of emotion.

At last she raised her head and said: "Why did Mr. Amherst let her come to you, instead of coming himself?"

"He knows nothing of her being here. She persuaded him to wait a day, and as soon as he had gone to the mills this morning she took the first train to town."

"Ah——" Mrs. Ansell murmured thoughtfully; and Mr. Langhope rejoined, with a conclusive gesture: "Do you want more proofs of panic-stricken guilt?"

"Oh, guilt—" His friend revolved her large soft muff about a drooping hand. "There's so much still to understand."

"Your mind does not, as a rule, work so slowly!" he said with some asperity; but she paid no heed to his tone.

"Amherst, for instance—how long has he known of this?" she continued.

"A week or two *only*—she made that clear."

"And what is his attitude?"

"Ah—that, I conjecture, is just what she means to keep us from knowing!"

"You mean she's afraid——?"

Mr. Langhope gathered his haggard brows in a frown. "She's afraid, of course—mortally—I never saw a woman more afraid. I only wonder she had the courage to face me."

"Ah—that's it! Why *did* she face you? To extenuate her act—to give you her version, because she feared his might be worse? Do you gather that that was her motive?"

It was Mr. Langhope's turn to hesitate. He furrowed the thick Turkey rug with the point of his ebony stick, pausing once or twice to revolve it gimlet-like in a gap of the heavy pile.

"Not her avowed motive, naturally."

"Well—at least, then, let me have that."

"Her avowed motive? Oh, she'd prepared one, of course—trust her to have a dozen ready! The one she produced was—simply the desire to protect her husband."

"Her husband? Does *he* too need protection?"

"My God, if he takes her side——! At any rate, her fear seemed to be that what she had done might ruin him; might cause him to feel—as well he may!—that the mere fact of being her husband makes his situation as Cicely's step-father, as my son-in-law, intolerable. And she came to clear him, as it were—to find out, in short, on what terms I should be willing to continue my present relations with him as though this hideous thing had not been known to me."

Mrs. Ansell raised her head quickly. "Well—and what were your terms?"

He hesitated. "She spared me the pain of proposing any—I had only to accept hers."

"Hers?"

"That she should disappear altogether from my sight—and from the child's, naturally. Good heaven, I should like to include Amherst in that! But I'm tied hand and foot, as you see, by Cicely's interests; and I'm bound to say she exonerated him completely—completely!"

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Mrs. Ansell was again silent, but a swift flight of thoughts traversed her drooping face. "But if you are to remain on the old terms with her husband, how is she to disappear out of your life without also disappearing out of his?"

Mr. Langhope gave a slight laugh. "I leave her to work out that problem."

"And you think Amherst will consent to such conditions?"

"He's not to know of them."

The unexpectedness of the reply reduced Mrs. Ansell to a sound of inarticulate interrogation; and Mr. Langhope continued: "Not at first, that is. She had thought it all out—foreseen everything; and she wrung from me—I don't yet know how!—a promise that when I saw him I would make it appear that I cleared him completely, not only of any possible complicity, or whatever you choose to call it, but of any sort of connection with the matter in my thoughts of him. I am, in short, to let him feel that he and I are to continue on the old footing—and I agreed, on the condition of her effacing herself somehow—of course on some other pretext."

"Some other pretext? But what conceivable pretext? My poor friend, he adores her!"

Mr. Langhope raised his eye-brows slightly. "We haven't seen him since this became known to him. *She* has; and she let slip that he was horror-struck."

Mrs. Ansell looked up with a quick exclamation. "Let slip? Isn't it much more likely that she forced it on you—emphasized it to the last limit of credulity?" She sank her hands to the arms of the chair, and exclaimed, looking him straight in the eyes: "You say she was frightened? It strikes me she was dauntless!"

Mr. Langhope stared a moment; then he said, with an ironic shrug: "No doubt, then, she counted on its striking me too."

Mrs. Ansell breathed a shuddering sigh. "Oh, I understand your feeling as you do—I'm deep in the horror of it myself. But I can't help seeing that this woman might have saved herself—and that she's chosen to save her husband instead. What I don't see, from what I know of him," she musingly proceeded, "is how, on any imaginable pretext, she will induce him to accept the sacrifice."

Mr. Langhope made a resentful movement. "If that's the only point your mind dwells on——!"

Mrs. Ansell looked up. "It doesn't dwell any where as yet—except, my poor Henry," she murmured, rising to move toward him, and softly laying her hand on his bent shoulder—"except on your distress and misery—on the very part I can't yet talk of, can't question you about. . . ."

He let her hand rest there a moment; then he turned, and drawing it into his own tremulous fingers, pressed it silently, with a clinging helpless grasp that drew the tears to her lids.

Justine Brent, in her earliest girlhood, had gone through one of those emotional experiences that are the infantile diseases of the heart. She had fancied herself beloved of a youth of her own age; had secretly returned his devotion, and had seen it reft from her by another. Such an incident, as inevitable as the measles, sometimes, like that mild malady, leaves traces out of all proportion to its actual virulence. The blow fell on Justine with tragic suddenness, and she reeled under it, thinking darkly of death, and renouncing all hopes of future happiness. Her ready pen often beguiled her into recording her impressions, and she now found an escape from despair in writing the history of a damsel similarly wronged. In her tale, the heroine killed herself; but the author, saved by this vicarious sacrifice, lived, and in time even smiled over her manuscript.

It was many years since Justine Amherst had recalled this youthful incident; but the memory of it recurred to her as she turned from Mr. Langhope's door. For one stealing moment, death seemed the easiest escape from what confronted her; but though she could no longer medicine her despair by turning it into fiction, she knew at once that she must somehow transpose it into terms of action, that she must always escape from life into more life, and not into its negation.

She had been carried into Mr. Langhope's presence by that expiatory passion which still burns so high, and draws its sustenance from so deep down, in the unsleeping hearts of women. Though she had never wavered in her conviction that her act had been justified, her ideas staggered under the sudden realization of its conse-

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quences. Not till that morning had she seen those consequences in their terrible, unsuspected extent, had she understood how one stone rashly loosened from the laboriously erected structure of human society may produce remote fissures in that clumsy fabric. She saw that, having hazarded the loosening of the stone, she should have held herself apart from ordinary human ties, like some priestess set apart for the service of the temple. And instead, she had seized happiness with both hands, taken it as the gift of the very fate she had herself precipitated! She remembered some old Greek saying to the effect that the gods never forgive the mortal who presumes to love and suffer like a god. She had dared to do both, and the gods were bringing ruin on that deeper self which had its life in those about her.

So much had become clear to her when she heard Amherst declare his intention of laying the facts before Mr. Langhope. His few broken words lit up the farthest verge of their lives. She saw that his retrospective reverence for his wife's memory, which was as far as possible removed from the strong passion of the mind and senses that bound him to herself, was indelibly stained and desecrated by the discovery that all he had received from the one woman had been won for him by the deliberate act of the other. This was what no reasoning, no appeal to the calmer judgment, could ever, in his inmost thoughts, undo or extenuate. It could find appeasement only in the deliberate renunciation of all that had come to him from Bessy; and this renunciation, so different from the mere sacrifice of material well-being, was bound up with consequences so far-reaching, so destructive to the cause which had inspired his whole life, that Justine felt the helpless terror of the mortal who has launched one of the heavenly bolts.

She could think of no way of diverting it but the way she had chosen. She must see Mr. Langhope first, must clear Amherst of the least faint association with her act or her intention. And to do this, she must exaggerate, not her own compunction—for she could not depart from the exact truth in reporting her feelings and convictions—but her husband's first instinctive movement of horror, the revulsion of feeling her avowal had really produced in him. This was the most painful part of her task, and for this reason her excited imagination invested it with special expiatory value. If she could purchase Amherst's peace of mind, and the security of his future, by confessing, and even over-emphasizing, the momentary estrangement between them, there would be a bitter joy in such payment!

Her hour with Mr. Langhope proved the correctness of her intuition. She could save Amherst only by effacing herself from his life: those about him would be only too ready to let her bear the full burden of obloquy. She could see that, for a dozen reasons, Mr. Langhope, even in the first shock of his dismay, unconsciously craved a way of exonerating Amherst, of preserving intact the relation on which so much of his comfort had come to depend. And she had the courage to make the most of this desire, to fortify it by isolating Amherst's point of view from hers; so that, when the dreadful hour was over, she had the solace of feeling that she had completely freed him from any conceivable consequence of her act.

So far, the impetus of self-sacrifice had carried her straight to her goal; but, as frequently happens with such atoning impulses, it left her stranded just short of any subsequent plan of conduct. Her next step, indeed, was clear enough: she must return to Hanaford, explain to her husband that she had felt impelled to tell her own story to Mr. Langhope, and then take up her ordinary life till chance offered her a pretext for fulfilling her promise. But what pretext was likely to present itself? No symbolic horn would sound the hour of fulfillment; she must be her own judge, and hear the call in the depths of her own conscience.

XXXIX

When Amherst, returning late that afternoon from Westmore, learned of his wife's departure, and read the note she had left, he found it, for a time, impossible to bring order out of the confusion of feeling produced in him.

His mind had been sufficiently agitated before. All day, through the routine of work at the mills, he had laboured inwardly with the difficulties confronting him; and his mental disturbance had been increased by the fact that his situation bore an ironic

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likeness to that in which, from a far different cause, he had found himself at the other great crisis of his life. Once more he was threatened with the possibility of having to give up Westmore, at a moment when concentration of purpose and persistency of will were at last beginning to declare themselves in tangible results. Before, he had only given up dreams; now it was their fruition that he was asked to surrender. And he was immovable in his resolve to withdraw absolutely from Westmore if the statement he had to make to Mr. Langhope was received with the least hint of an offensive mental reservation. All forms of moral compromise had always been difficult to Amherst, and like many men absorbed in large and complicated questions, he craved above all clearness and peace in his household relation. The first months of his second marriage had brought him, as a part of richer and deeper joys, this enveloping sense of a clear moral medium, in which no subterfuge or equivocation could draw breath. He had felt that henceforth he could pour into his work all the combative energy, the powers of endurance, resistance, renovation, which had once been unprofitably dissipated in the vain attempt to bring some sort of harmony into his married life. Between himself and Justine, apart from their love for each other, there was the wider passion for their kind, which gave back to them an enlarged and deepened reflection of their personal feeling. In such an air it had seemed that no petty egotism could hamper their growth, no misintelligence obscure their love; yet all the while this pure happiness had been unfolding against a sordid background of falsehood and intrigue from which his soul turned with loathing.

Justine was right in assuming that Amherst had never thought much about women. He had vaguely regarded them as meant to people that hazy domain of feeling designed to offer the busy man an escape from thought. His second marriage, leading him to the blissful discovery that woman can think as well as feel, that there are beings of the ornamental sex in whom brain and heart have so enlarged each other that their emotions are as lucid as thought, their thoughts as warm as emotions—this discovery had had the effect of making him discard his former summary conception of woman as a bundle of inconsequent impulses, and admit her at a stroke to full mental equality with her lord. The result of this act of manumission was, that in judging Justine, he could no longer allow for what was purely feminine in her conduct. It was incomprehensible to him that she, to whom truth had seemed the essential element of life, should have been able to draw breath, and find happiness, in an atmosphere of falsehood and dissimulation. His mind could assent—at least in the abstract—to the reasonableness of her act; but he was still unable to understand her having concealed it from him. He could enter far enough into her feelings to allow for her having kept silence on his first return to Lynbrook, when she was still under the strain of a prolonged and terrible trial; but that she should have continued to do so when he and she had discovered and confessed their love for each other, threw an intolerable doubt on her whole course.

He stayed late at the mills, finding one pretext after another for delaying his return to Hanaford, and trying, while he gave one part of his mind to the methodical performance of his task, to adjust the other to some definite view of the future. But all was darkened and confused by the sense that, between himself and Justine, complete communion of thought was no longer possible. It had, in fact, never existed; there had always been a locked chamber in her mind, and he knew not yet what other secrets might inhabit it.

The shock of finding her gone when he reached home gave a new turn to his feelings. She had made no mystery of her destination, leaving word with the servants that she had gone to town to see Mr. Langhope; and Amherst found a note from her on his study table.

"I feel," she wrote, "that I ought to see Mr. Langhope myself, and be the first to tell him what must be told. It was like you, dearest, to wish to spare me this, but it would have made me more unhappy; and Mr. Langhope might wish to hear the facts in my own words. I shall come back tomorrow, and after that it will be for you to decide what must be done."

The brevity and simplicity of the note were characteristic: in moments of high tension, Justine was always calm and direct. And it was like her, too, not to make any covert appeal to his sympathy, not to

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seek to entrap his judgment by caressing words and plaintive allusions. The quiet tone in which she stated her purpose matched the firmness and courage of the act, and for a moment Amherst was shaken by a deep revulsion of feeling. Her heart was level with his, after all—if she had done wrong she would bear the brunt of it alone. It was so exactly what he himself would have felt and done in such a situation that faith in her flowed back through all the dried channels of his heart. But an instant later the current set the other way. The wretched years of his first marriage had left in him a residue of distrust, a tendency to dissociate every act from its ostensible motive. He had been too profoundly the dupe of his own enthusiasm not to retain this streak of uneasy scepticism, and it now moved him to ask if Justine's sudden departure had not been prompted by some other cause than the one she avowed. Had that alone actuated her, why not have stated it to him, and asked his consent to her plan? Why let him leave the house without a hint of her purpose, and slip off by the first train as soon as he was safe at Westmore? Might it not be that she had special reasons for wishing Mr. Langhope to *hear her own version first*—that there were questions she wished to parry herself, explanations she could trust no one to make for her? The thought plunged Amherst into deeper misery. He knew not how to defend himself against these disintegrating suspicions—he only felt that, once the accord between two minds is broken, it is less easy to restore than the passion between two hearts. He dragged heavily through his solitary evening, and awaited with dread and yet impatience a message announcing the hour of his wife's return.

It would have been easier—far easier—when she left Mr. Langhope's door, to go straight out into the darkness and let it close in on her for good.

Justine felt herself yielding to the spell of that perfidious suggestion as she walked along the lamplit pavement, hardly conscious of the turn her steps were taking. The door of the house which a few weeks before had been virtually hers, had closed on her without a question. She had been suffered to go out into the darkness without being asked whither she was going, or under what roof her night would be spent. The irony of the contrast between her past and present sounded through the tumult of her thoughts like the evil laughter of temptation. The house at Hanaford, to which she was returning, would look at her with the same alien face—nowhere on earth, at that moment, was a door which would open to her like the door of home.

In her painful self-absorption she followed the side street toward Madison Avenue, and struck southward down that peaceable thoroughfare. There was a physical relief in rapid motion, and she walked on, still hardly aware of her direction, toward the clustered lights of Madison Square. Should she return to Hanaford, she had still several hours to dispose of before the departure of the midnight train; and if she did not return, hours and dates no longer had any existence for her.

It would be easier—infinitely easier—not to go back. To take up her life with Amherst would, under any circumstances, be painful enough; to take it up under the tacit restriction of her pledge to Mr. Langhope, seemed more than human courage could face. As she reached the square, she had almost reached the conclusion that such a temporary renewal was beyond her strength—beyond what any standard of duty exacted. The question of an alternative hardly troubled her. She would simply go on living, and find an escape in work and material hardship. It would not be difficult for so inconspicuous a person to slip back into the obscure anonymous mass of humanity.

She paused for a moment on the edge of the square, vaguely seeking a direction for her feet that might permit the working of her thoughts to go on uninterrupted; and as she stood there, her eyes fell on the bench near the corner of Twenty-sixth Street, where she had sat with Amherst on the day of his flight from Lynbrook. He too had dreamed of escaping from insoluble problems into the clear air of hard work and simple duties; and she remembered the words with which she had turned him back. The cases, of course, were not identical, since he had been flying in anger and wounded pride from a situation for which he was in no wise to blame; yet, if even at such a moment she had insisted on charity and forbearance, how could she now show less self-denial than she had exacted of him?

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"If you go away for a time, surely it ought to be in such a way that your going does not seem to cast any reflection on Bessy. . . ." That was how she had put it to him, and how, with the mere change of a name, she must now, for reasons as cogent, put it to herself. It was just as much a part of the course she had deliberately planned, to return to her husband now, and take up their daily life together, as it would, later on, be her duty to drop out of that life, when her doing so could no longer involve him in the penalty to be paid.

She stood a little while looking at the bench on which they had sat that morning, and giving thanks in her heart for the past strength which was now helping to build up her failing courage: such a patchwork business are our best endeavours, yet so faithfully does each weak upward impulse reach back a hand to the next.

Justine's explanation of her visit to Mr. Langhope was not wholly satisfying to her husband. She did not conceal from him that the scene had been painful, but she gave him to understand, as briefly as possible, that Mr. Langhope, after his first movement of uncontrollable distress, had seemed able to make allowances for the pressure under which she had acted, and that he had, at any rate, given no sign of intending to let her avowal make any change in the relation between the two households. If she did not—as Amherst afterward recalled—put all this specifically into words, she contrived to convey it in her manner, in her allusions, above all in her recovered composure. She had the demeanour of one who has gone through a severe test of strength, but come out of it in complete control of the situation. There was something slightly unnatural in this prompt solution of so complicated a difficulty, and it had the effect of making Amherst ask himself what, to produce such a result, must have been the gist of her communication to Mr. Langhope. If the latter had shown any disposition to be cruel, or even unjust, Amherst's sympathies would have rushed instantly to his wife's defence; but the fact that there was apparently to be no call on them left his reason free to compare and discriminate, with the final result that the more he pondered on his father-in-law's attitude the less intelligible it became.

A few day's after Justine's return he was called to New York on business; and before leaving he told her that he should of course take the opportunity of having a talk with Mr. Langhope.

She received the statement with the gentle composure from which she had not departed since her return from town; and he added tentatively, as if to provoke her to a clearer expression of feeling: "I shall not be satisfied, of course, till I see for myself just how he feels—just how much, at bottom, this has affected him—since my own future relation to him will, as I have already told you, depend entirely on his treatment of you."

She met this without any sign of disturbance. "His treatment of me was very kind," she said. "But would it not, on your part," she continued hesitatingly, "be kinder not to touch on the subject so soon again?"

The line deepened between his brows. "Touch on it? I sha'n't rest till I've gone to the bottom of it! Till then, you must understand," he summed up with decision, "I feel myself only on sufferance here at Westmore."

"Yes—I understand," she assented; and as he bent over to kiss her for goodbye, a tenuous impenetrable barrier seemed to lie between their lips.

It was Justine's turn to await with a passionate anxiety her husband's home-coming; and when, on the third day, he reappeared, her dearly-acquired self-control gave way to a tremulous eagerness. This was, after all, the turning-point in their lives: everything depended upon how Mr. Langhope had "played up" to his cue, had kept to his side of their bond.

Amherst's face showed signs of emotional havoc: when feeling once broke out in him, it had full play, and she could see that his hour with Mr. Langhope had struck to the roots of life. But the resultant expression was one of invigoration, not defeat; and she gathered at a glance that her partner had not betrayed her. She drew a tragic solace from the immediate success of her achievement; yet it flung her into her husband's arms with a passion of longing to which, as she instantly, intuitively felt, he did not as completely respond.

There was still, then, something "between" them: somewhere the mechanism

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of her scheme had failed, or its action had not produced the result she had counted on.

As soon as they were alone in the study she said, as quietly as she could: "You saw your father-in-law? You talked with him?"

"Yes—I spent the afternoon with him. Cicely sent you her love. . . ."

She coloured quickly, and murmured: "And Mr. Langhope?"

"He is perfectly calm now, of course—perfectly impartial.—This business has made me feel," Amherst added abruptly, "that I have never been quite fair to him. I never thought him a magnanimous man."

"He has proved himself so now," Justine murmured, her head bent low over a bit of needlework; and Amherst affirmed energetically: "He has been more than that—generous!"

She looked up at him with a smile. "I am so glad, dear; so glad there is not to be a shadow between you. . . ."

"No," Amherst said, his voice flagging slightly. There was a pause, and then he went on with renewed emphasis: "Of course I made my point quite clear to him."

"Your point?"

"That I stand or fall by his judgment of you."

Oh, if he had but said it more tenderly! But he delivered it with the quiet resolution of a man who contends for an abstract principle of justice, and not for a passion grown into the fibres of his heart!

"You are generous too," she faltered, her voice thickening a little.

Amherst frowned; and she perceived that any hint, on her part, of recognizing the slightest change in their relations, was still like pressure on a painful bruise.

"There is no need for such words between us," he said impatiently; "and Mr. Langhope's attitude," he added, with an effort at a lighter tone, "has made it unnecessary, thank heaven, that we should ever revert to the subject again."

He turned to his desk as he spoke, and plunged into perusal of the letters that had accumulated in his absence.

There was a temporary excess of work at Westmore, and during the days that followed he threw himself into it with a zeal that showed Justine how eagerly he sought any pretext for avoiding confidential moments. The perception was painful enough, yet not as painful as another discovery that awaited her. She too had her tasks at Westmore: the supervision of the hospital, the day nursery, the mothers' club, and the various other organizations whereby she and Amherst were trying to put some sort of social unity into the lives of the mill-hands; and when, on the day after his return from New York, she presented herself, as usual, at the Westmore office, where she was in the habit of holding a brief consultation with him before starting on her rounds, she was at once aware of a new tinge of constraint in his manner. It hurt him, then, to see her at Westmore—hurt him more than to live with her, at Hanaford, under Bessy's roof! For it was there, at the mills, that his real life was led, the life with which Justine had been most intimately identified, the life that had been made possible for both by the magnanimity of that other woman whose presence was now forever between them. . . .

Justine made no sign. She resumed her work as though unconscious of any change; but whereas in the past they had always found pretexts for seeking each other out, to discuss the order of the day's work, or merely to warm their hearts by the exchange of a word or two, now each went a separate way, sometimes not meeting till they regained the house at night-fall.

And as the weeks passed in this way, she began to understand that, by a strange inversion of probability, the relation between Amherst and herself was to be the means of holding her to her compact with Mr. Langhope—if indeed it were not nearer the truth to say that it had rendered such a compact unnecessary. Amherst had done his best to take up their life together as though there had been no break in it; but slowly the fact was being forced on her that by remaining with him she was subjecting him to intolerable suffering—was coming to be the personfication of the very thoughts and associations from which he struggled to escape. Happily her promptness of action had preserved Westmore to him, and in Westmore she believed that he would in time find a refuge from even the memory of what he was now enduring. But meanwhile her presence kept the thought alive; and, had every other incentive lost its power, this would have been enough to rouse her flagging purpose. Fate had,

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ironically enough, furnished her with an unanswerable reason for leaving Amherst; the impossibility of their keeping up such a relation as now existed between them would soon become too patent to be denied.

Meanwhile, as summer approached, she knew that external conditions would also call upon her to act. The visible signal for her withdrawal would be Cicely's next visit to Westmore. The child's birthday fell in early June; and Amherst, some months previously, had asked that she should be permitted to spend it at Hanaford, and that it should be chosen as the date for the opening of the first model cottages at Hopewood.

It was Justine who had originated the idea of associating Cicely's anniversaries with some significant moment in the annals of the mill colony; and struck by the happy suggestion, he had at once applied himself to hastening on the work at Hopewood. The eagerness of both Amherst and Justine that Cicely should be identified with the developing life of Westmore had been one of the chief influences in reconciling Mr. Langhope to his son-in-law's second marriage. Husband and wife had always made it clear that they regarded themselves as the mere trustees of the Westmore revenues, and that Cicely's name should, as early as possible, be associated with every measure taken for the welfare of her people. But now, as Justine knew, the situation was changed; and Cicely would not be allowed to come to Hanaford until she herself had left it. The manifold threads of divination that she was perpetually throwing out in Amherst's presence told her, without word or sign on his part, that he also awaited Cicely's birthday as a determining date in their lives. He spoke confidently, and as a matter of course, of Mr. Langhope's bringing his granddaughter at the promised time; but Justine could hear a note of challenge in his voice, as though he felt that Mr. Langhope's sincerity had not yet been put to the test.

As the time drew nearer it became more difficult for her to decide just how she should take the step she had determined on. She had no material anxiety for the future, for although she did not mean to accept a penny from her husband after she had left him, she knew it would be easy for her to take up her nursing again; and she knew also that her hospital connections would enable her to find work in a part of the country far enough distant to remove her entirely from his life. But she had not yet been able to invent a reason for leaving that should be sufficiently cogent to satisfy him, without directing his suspicions toward the truth. As she revolved the question in her anxious mind, she suddenly recalled an exclamation of Amherst's —a word spoken as they entered Mr. Langhope's door, on the fatal afternoon when she had found Wyant's letter awaiting her.

"There's nothing you can't make people believe, you little Jesuit!"

She had laughed in pure joy at his praise of her; for every bantering phrase had then been a caress. But now the words returned with a sinister meaning. She knew they were true as far as Amherst was concerned: in the arts of casuistry and equivocation a child could have outmatched him, and she had only to exert her will to dupe him as deeply as she pleased. Well! The task was odious, but it was needful: it was the bitterest part of her expiation that she must deceive him once more to save him from the results of her former deception. This decision once reached, every nerve in her became alert for an opportunity to do the thing and have it over; so that, whenever they were alone together, she was in an attitude of perpetual tension, her whole mind drawn up for its final spring.

The decisive word came, one evening toward the end of May, in the form of an allusion on Amherst's part to Cicely's approaching visit. Husband and wife were seated in the drawing-room after dinner, he with a book in hand, she bending, as usual, over the needlework which served at once as a pretext for lowered eyes, and as a means of disguising her fixed preoccupation.

"Have you worked out a plan?" he continued, laying down his book. "It occurred to me that it would be rather a good idea if we began with a sort of festivity for the kids at the day nursery. You could take Cicely there early, and I could bring out Mr. Langhope after luncheon. The whole performance would probably tire him too much."

Justine listened with suspended thread. "Yes—that seems a good plan," she agreed.

"Will you see about the details, then? You know it's only a week off."

"Yes, I know." She hesitated, and then

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took the spring. "I ought to tell you, John —that I—I think I may not be here. . . ."

He raised his head abruptly, and she saw the blood mount under his fair skin. "Not be here?"

She met his look as steadily as she could. "No. I think of going away for a while."

"Going away? Where? What is the matter—are you not well?"

There was her pretext—he had found it for her! Why should she not simply plead ill-health? Afterward, she would find a way of elaborating the details and making them plausible. But suddenly, as she was about to speak, there came to her the feeling which, up to one fatal moment in their lives, had always ruled their intercourse—the feeling that there must be truth, absolute truth, between them. Absolute, indeed, it could never be again, since he must never know of the condition exacted by Mr. Langhope; but that, at the moment, seemed almost a secondary motive compared to the deeper influences that were inexorably forcing them apart. At any rate, she would trump up no trivial excuse for the step she had resolved on; there should be truth, if not the whole truth, in this last decisive hour between them.

"Yes; I am quite well—at least my body is," she said quietly. "But I am tired, perhaps; my mind has been going round too long in the same circle of ideas." She paused for a brief space, and then, raising her head, and looking him straight in the eyes: "Has it not been so with you?" she asked.

The question drew a startled glance from Amherst. He rose from his chair and took a few steps toward the hearth, where a small fire was crumbling into embers. He turned his back to it, resting an arm on the mantel-shelf; then he said, in a somewhat unsteady tone: "I thought we had agreed not to speak of all that again."

Justine shook her head with a fugitive half-smile. "I made no such agreement. And besides, what is the use, when we can always hear each other's thoughts speak, and they speak of nothing else?"

Amherst's brows darkened. "That is not the case with mine," he began, almost harshly; but she raised her hand with a silencing gesture.

"I know you have tried your best that it should not be so; and perhaps you have succeeded better than I. But I am tired, horribly tired—I want to get away from everything!"

She saw a look of pain in his eyes. He continued to lean against the mantel-shelf, his head slightly lowered, his unseeing gaze fixed on a remote scroll in the pattern of the carpet; then he said, in a low tone: "I can only repeat again what I have said before—that I understand why you did what you did."

"Thank you," she answered, in the same tone.

There was another pause, for she could not trust herself to go on speaking; and presently he asked, with a tinge of bitterness in his voice: "That does not satisfy you?"

She hesitated. "It satisfies me as much as it does you—and no more," she replied at length.

He looked up hastily. "What do you mean?"

"Just what I say. We can neither of us go on living on that diet just at present." She rose as she spoke, and crossed over to the hearth. "I want to go back to my nursing—to go out to Michigan, to a town where I spent a few months the year before I first came to Hanaford. I have friends there, and can get work easily. And you can tell people that I was ill, and needed a change."

It had been easier to say than she had imagined, and her voice held its clear note till the end; but when she had ceased, the whole room began to reverberate with her words, and through the clashing they made in her brain she felt a sudden uncontrollable longing that they should provoke in him a cry of protest, of resistance. Oh, if he refused to let her go—if he caught her to him, and defied the world to part them—what then of her pledge to Mr. Langhope, what then of her resolve to pay the penalty alone?

But in the space of a heart-beat she knew that peril—that longed-for peril!—was past. Her husband had remained silent—he neither moved toward her, nor looked at her; and she felt in every slackening nerve that in the end he would let her go.

(To be concluded.)

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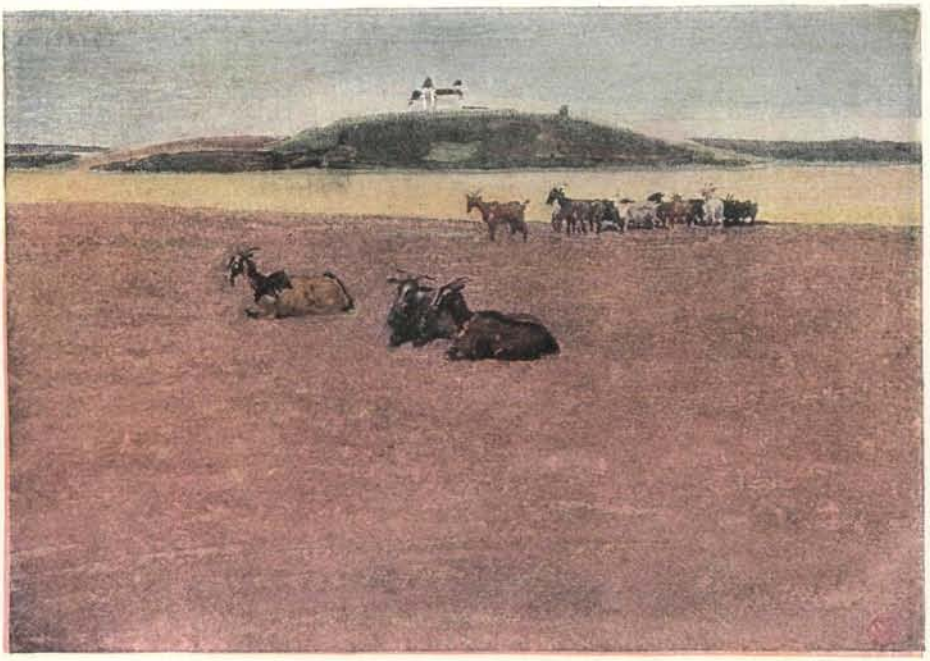

SPANISH IMPRESSIONS

By Edward Penfield

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

THROUGH the partly opened window of the second-class carriage, bleak, treeless stretches of sun-baked country slowly moved before us, as the train from Gibraltar rocked and swayed over a broad-gauge track, creeping in a very leisurely way up through old Spain. A shepherd in a lonely waste watched his flocks, and beyond arose a craggy formation like a miniature repetition of grim old Gibraltar, crowned, as all prominences seemed to be, with a monastery.

As we passed out of this, a comparatively fertile stretch would appear like magic, planted in vineyards or low, gnarled olive-trees; but before our eyes were accustomed to this luxuriance we were dragged through rocky gorges and the crevasses of a moun-

Our engine.

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The Puerta del Sol at night.

tain pass, an ideal rendezvous for bandits. The stations were many, and shrill-voiced women carrying huge water-jars and glasses peered into the window, shouting "*Aqua-a-a*" (water). As in the song of old, we

> Stopped twenty minutes at every station,
> Giving passengers ample time for meals;

and our conductor, a pompous person in a gorgeous uniform of gold braid, opened the doors of the coaches so that the passengers might get out and walk about.

Passing a group of black-haired men, with their heads tied in gay handkerchiefs and wearing flat-brimmed sombreros, I walked forward to inspect our engine and inquire, if possible, the cause of our slow progress and many delays; but an oval brass plate on the side of the cab of the locomotive, bearing the name of a German maker, explained it all—the date was 1869; and instead of berating the poor engineer, I inwardly complimented him for the remarkable preservation of his engine, and turned and rejoined my travelling companion.

There is a saying among the Spanish that the cool air of night, while too gracious to blow out a candle, will freeze a sentry in his box. We were reminded of the truth of this as the chill of evening drifted through the window, and as I closed it, I could see, in the gathering darkness, two *guardia civil* take their places in a compartment prepared for them in the forward part of our train. At each station the clink of their sabres could be heard in the still night air as they descended, and with my face pressed against the window glass, I could see them, walking up and down the earthen platform in their long picturesque cloaks, the butt of a polished musket occasionally sticking out from the long folds, catching the glint from the stars above.

Tucked away in my leather bag in the rack overhead was a little red guide-book, which will, if you read it, describe the many interesting places we visited much more completely than I could ever do; so I will say no more here than that when at last we reached Madrid most of our sight-seeing was over, and we were content to stand at night in the Puerta del Sol and watch the passing throng of soldiers, monks, toreadors, and girls in black mantillas. We found a

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In the Salon des Actualités.

concert-hall on the Carrera de S. Jerónimo, where the Spanish dancing-girl, in her gorgeous, heavily embroidered, long-fringed shawl, went through her sinuous, snake-like motions on a small stage. In front sat the pianist, violinist, and stage-manager, all in one, sharply silhouetted against the brightly lighted scenery.

Madrid kept us for a while, until my companion, the Historian, discovered a beautiful old garden, part of a mosque in an ancient town of romance, fifty miles away. One evening, soon after his discovery, we stepped from the railroad train into a very jolty omnibus, passed over the Tagus on an old Roman bridge, and entered the city's gates. After a climb up steep hills and through narrow streets we found ourselves at our hotel, in close proximity to "our garden"—for so we began to call it, as the Historian and I sat over our coffee and rolled and puffed Spanish cigarettes. On the following morning he led the way through narrow streets and past low, yellow-tiled, white-washed houses, a glimpse through some of whose fantastically grilled iron gates showed a *patio*, or inner court, with a small fountain standing in the centre, giving out the cooling sound of dripping water. Up a hilly, narrow street, and turning first to the left, and then to the right, we began to descend

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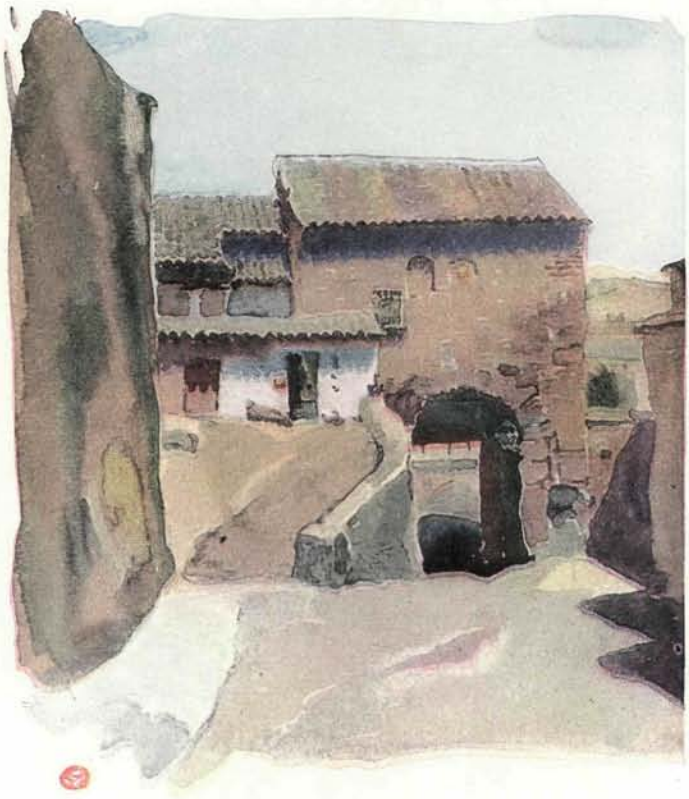

One of the gates of the city.

slightly until we neared the wall which limited the town, as the Moors built it around the old Roman city.

Here was an old mosque, in the entrance of which the Christians had placed, arrogantly or victoriously, whichever way you will, the sign of the Virgin and the child Jesus as soon as the Moors were driven out. Whatever remained of the beautiful Arabesque interior has been rudely whitewashed away and the altar was in a sad state of repair. Beside this, and through a short cloister, was the garden, both presided over by an old woman who now came down one of the garden paths with a bunch of huge keys dangling by her side. She had a face that showed hard work, but held a kindly look, although a quizzical and shrewd expression crept over it when she talked.

Away back in the garden, which extended to the city wall, was her abode, a thick-walled house, two stories high, with a yellowish tiled roof. Two great oaken doors, thickly studded with large-headed iron nails, led into the house, and several green bird-cages and the Japanesque shadows of rambling branches and quivering foliage of small quince and pomegranate trees relieved the monotony of the white walls.

The lower floor contained two rooms, the kitchen and living-room. The latter was comparatively bare. Square red tiles were on the floor, and were fitted into the stairway leading to two bedrooms above. On the wall, over a square and well-scrubbed table, was an old picture of two saints, one in a very red cloak and the other in an equally vivid blue mantle—perhaps taken from the old mosque at some time during its occupation by the Catholics. The table had an under shelf with a large circular hole cut into it to receive the brazier of charcoal in cold weather, and together with a settee and several low-seated chairs formed the furnishings of this room.

Near the table a low, faded green door led to the kitchen, which perhaps was more interesting and truly Spanish. Against one

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Drawn by Edward Penfield.

Norveta.

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A diligence.

of the walls was a wooden stand holding two large semi-porous water-jars, and beside this was the storage place for charcoal. Over these, and reaching the entire length of the room, was a long shelf upon which Andrea had formed a collection of the most curious bottles—but no doubt they all had their uses. The hearth stretched across the farther end of the room, slightly raised under a projecting hood, and the smoke curled in long, lazy ribbons, streaking its way up the once whitened wall. As many small deep-blue stew-pots hugged the bright glow of the charcoal as were able to crowd around it, each seeming to say: "Don't push me; I was here before you."

There was a well in the garden, overgrown with grape-vines, under which the clothes were washed; and the water was afterward made to flow through narrow canals to irrigate the garden. A fountain had been planned for the far end, but had been abandoned, and from somewhere the water flowed slowly into its basin. Small fruit-trees grew beside the narrow paths and well-known flowers, such as geraniums, fleur-de-lis, and ragged sailors, filled flower-pots and were ranged along the walks.

By an arrangement of the Historian's (a few *pesetas* a day) all this beautiful spot was ours to work in as long as we chose, with only the interruption of travellers who came to the place, and from whose gratuities Andrea derived her living; but they were few,

The women who come to the fountain.

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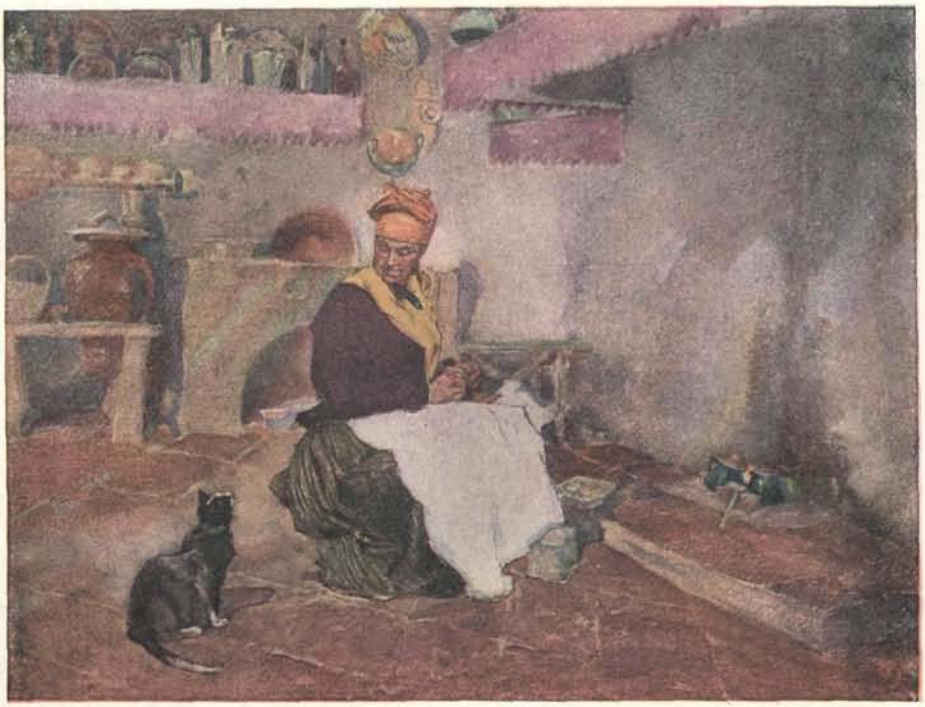
mostly French, and an occasional Englishman; and one day twenty or more young ladies (I believe they were French, although some spoke Spanish), dressed in long blue cloaks with orange-red collars, and accompanied by two nuns, paid us a visit. They were a jolly crowd of girls, and the nuns, who were not old, answered our mild jests as merrily as the others, as they passed our easels in the shade of the old mosque.

How blue the sky seemed as we worked and compared it with the earth, bathed and drenched in a flood of sunshine that purpled the shadows and yellowed the ground! The ragged sailors and fleur-de-lis danced in jolly blues and the geraniums and quince blossoms flamed in scarlet dashes, and it filled me with despair, as I tried to put it down on canvas.

Andrea was a busy woman, cooking in the kitchen and washing at the well, and then there was Norveta, her daughter, and that imp, Norveta's son, a boy of five, who *would* stand beside us and squeeze the tubes of paint when we were not looking. Andrea's brother sometimes came. He was a very old man and wore a neat, roomy suit of coarse gray material, the garb of the "home" where he was spending his declining years. He delighted in doing what little work was done toward keeping the garden in order—hoeing the paths, trimming and tying up the small bushes, and smoking a loosely rolled cigarette between times in the shade of the old wall.

Norveta's hair-dresser came twice a week and left her with a heavily pomaded and perfumed coiffure. She liked to sit with folded arms and watch us work. When I was away she mimicked me—the way I tried to drink water from the earthen jar, Spanish fashion, by holding it up before me and endeavoring to let the stream run down my throat (but more often it danced on my nose or spattered on my chin); and when *I* worked in the garden alone she gave *me* most realistic imitations of the Historian. But Andrea did most of the work, beside showing strangers through the mosque and garden, and when she passed by with the keys she would hold out what they had given her. When the amount was small she held it between two outstretched fingers and made a grimace of disgust, but a silver



The kitchen.

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peseta she was very proud of and would shove way down in her long pocket as she nodded in silent satisfaction.

There was a road which ran out of the city to the country beyond and passed our garden. We could sit on the wall at this point, for it was low, and look down on the steady stream of traffic going in and out of the city's gate. Here the poor, patient little donkey or his half-brother, the mule, could be seen patiently picking his way or plodding through dust with his heavy burden, half-fed, beaten, and abused, and sadly compensated by a gorgeous harness of very wide leather hung with gay pompons and rows and rows of tinkling bells about the neck. I noticed that the upper portion of all the animals was shaved, from a line just back of the ear down and passing over the haunches, where fantastic designs were often indulged in—depending, I suppose, on the cleverness of the barber. I do not understand the reason of this custom—the hair is certainly a protection, both from the vicious flies of the country and the galling straps of the heavy harness. To the many inquiries that were made of drivers, horse-dealers at the fairs, and innkeepers no satisfactory answer could be given. Perhaps a shaven hide makes the usual grooming process unnecessary. Is it the custom among *any* people to give the right answer when laziness is the true reason?

A short distance down the road was a fountain where women, with water-jars braced against their hips, met and gossiped in the morning, as the diligence with its team of five mules rattled lickety-split down the road; for a Spanish driver is most generous with the lash.

After the day's work we liked to sit on the wall overlooking the road and the town and watch the sunset glow of gold and rose fade from the sky and the twinkling lights in the city below shine out one by one. Then would the Historian point out the wonderful story told by this old Spanish town. The climate is kind to masonry, and many relics of the old Roman city were still in a state of usefulness. About these the swarthy Moor had built *his* city in substantial and gorgeous style; so that the Spaniard of to-day has had little reason to build his own walls, but has passed within the halls of the Mohammedan, and lives care-free, with his cigarette quietly sending up long curling ribbons of smoke to intertwine with the heavily carved ebony rafters above, still flaked with the old ivory and pearl of a dazzling past.

The seréno.

When the still night air enveloped the city the *seréno* walked abroad with his heavy blanket wound about his throat, holding his spear and lantern. Around his waist was a huge leathern belt, with rows of narrow pockets filled with keys. The old key-hole joke has found no place in Spanish humor, for when a householder approaches his home in the quiet, chilly hours three sharp claps of the hands bring the *seréno*. He peers into the face of the *señor* for recognition, looks down into the key pocket for the right key, gently leads him to his domicile, and quietly opening the door, with a low bow ushers him in, and with a softly-spoken "*Buenas noches*," relocks the portal and mournfully calls out the hour—"*Dos horas, seréno*"—perhaps.

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VENTURES AND CONSUMMATIONS

By George Cabot Lodge

I

THEY are gone! . . . they have all left us one by one:
Swiftly, with undissuadable strong tread;
Cuirassed in song, with wisdom helmeted,
They are gone before us into the dark, alone.
Upward their wings rush radiant to the sun;
Seaward the ships of their emprise are sped;
Onward their starlight of desire is shed;
Their trumpet-call is forward;—they are gone!
Let us take thought and go!—we know not why
Nor whence nor where—let us take wings and fly!
Let us take ship and sail, take heart and dare!
Let us deserve at last, as they have done,
To say of all men living and dead who share
The soul's supreme adventure—*We* are gone!

II

Let us go hence! . . . However dark the way,
Let us at all adventure hasten hence!
Too well we know what secret excellence,
So long unrealized, brooks no more delay
Of who would make love perfect and display
The soul's inherent high magnificence!
Haste! lest we lose the clear ambitious sense
Of what is ours to gain and to gainsay!
Let us go hence! lest dreadfully we die,
Die at the core of life where love is great,
Where thought is grave, audacious and serene;
Let us go hence!—all vast achievements lie
Hence, and the truth's transcendent virtues wait
Up the dark distance, radiant though unseen!

III

O great departures from the thrift and care
Of a less love, of a less truth than we
Can hardly, in the last extremity
Of all our powers, believe that we may share!—
Nobler prosperities that wait us where
We go—if we have strength and will to be
Mariners of whatever wreck-strewn sea,
Waifs on whatever ways shall take us there!—
O great departures! O prosperities!
Ventures and consummations!—you are hence:
Hence from the safe denials and pieties
Which life is eased and ruined and pleasured of:
For the strong heart conceives no bounds of love;
The soul no measure of magnificence!

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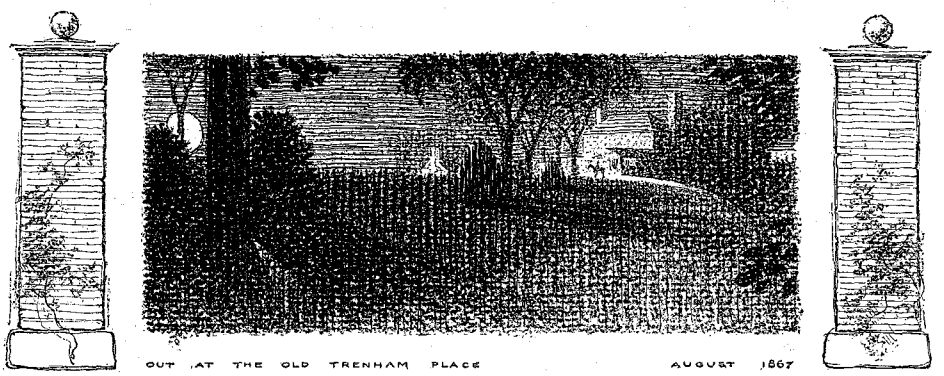

OUT AT THE OLD TRENHAM PLACE — AUGUST 1867

THE RIVALS OF MR. KILCAMMON

By Harrison Robertson

Illustrations by Frederic Dorr Steele

I

IT was the night of the Tournament Ball. Out at the old Trenham place, two or three miles from the town of Mavistoc, in Middle Tennessee, a boy of sixteen, whose most notable features were his hands and feet, jumped from his horse, rang the door-bell, and impatiently entered the house before the leisurely Wesley had opened the door.

"Say, Wesley," he spoke imperiously, in a voice undergoing the change from treble to falsetto, "here's a note I want you to take to Miss Helen."

It was written on a sheet of foolscap, which had been folded several times, the upper right-hand corner being turned down with scrupulous exactness.

"I brought it myself," the boy added, "because every nigger on the place is afraid to go out o' doors after dark on account of all this here talk about the Ku-Klux."

Wesley seemed a little startled for an instant, but after that began with sage solemnity: "Oh, yes, Klu-Kluxes! Well, suh, dey is a passel er gabble gwine on 'bout Klu——"

The boy cut him short with an order to "go on with that note"; to which he responded with an interrogatory if he wasn't going as fast as his legs could carry him. "En how kin I, p'intedly, go any faster, Mr. Wollie?"

Whereupon that young man spoke up sharply: "See here, Wesley, you ought to know by this time my name's Mr. Kilcammon!"

The negro's usually grave face wrinkled with a grin as he turned and walked slowly toward the door. "Listen at dat boy," he chuckled, shaking his head from side to side. "Dey ain't no'h'n' ez funny ez a young rooster when he fus' begins tryin' to crow."

He met Helen Trenham at the door and handed the note to her.

"I—I had to bring it myself, Miss Helen," Mr. Kilcammon explained, with an uncertain smile.

"Is that you, Wollie? I didn't know you were here." She greeted him in a full, soft voice, which to more than Mr. Kilcammon was one of her greatest charms. "Excuse

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me and I'll read it"; and she unfurled the manifolded missive, which she found as here worded and constructed:

Compliments of Mr. Wolworth P. Kilcammon to Miss Helen Trenham and would be pleased if she would favor him with the Honor of permiting me to Escoart you to the ball and also home again.

I am,

Most respectfully,

Yr Obdt Servt

Wolworth P. Kilcammon.

"Why, Wollie, what a courtly note you write!" she said. "And I'm sorry, but I have promised to go to the ball with Captain Gifford."

"Cap'n Gifford always seems to be a lucky dog," sombrely.

"But why not join us?" Helen smiled. "Your old sweetheart, Jessie Barrows, is to be with us."

"What! that little *thing*? Pshuh! that was when we was just little boys and girls!"

Jessie Barrows was Helen's California cousin, whom she had not seen for several years until Jessie's arrival that afternoon.

She came down the stairs with Judge Trenham, and in the hall they met Captain Gifford, late of the C. S. A., a young man who might have been anywhere between the ages of thirty and forty, well-formed, suave, with fine eyes, a mellow voice, and just a suggestion of effeminacy, contributed, perhaps, by his straight nose and his thick hair, worn long enough to accommodate his occasional habit of running his fingers through it.

For several minutes after they had joined Helen and Mr. Kilcammon the captain, who had bent over Miss Barrows's hand with a courtliness whose like she did not remember to have seen before, spoke, while addressing his remarks to all, more directly to her.

"It's too bad you did not arrive in time to see the tournament to-day," he was saying now.

"Yes; and I was so disappointed! Please tell me what a tournament is?"

"In *our* tournament to-day," Gifford added, to the judge's explanatory answer to Miss Barrows's question, "the winner won the title of 'Knight of the Red Mask,' along with the Red Mask itself, by wearing which to-night he will be entitled to choose any lady present with whom to open the ball in the introductory lancers; which aforesaid lady, by virtue thereof, is to be honored as the authoritatively installed and only genuine 'Queen of Beauty and the Ball!'"

Gifford laughed.

"And did you ride in the tournament to-day, Captain Gifford?" the girl asked.

"Now, that's unfair! All the riders wore masks to-day—even the horses were hooded—and no one is supposed to know who the victor and the vanquished are until the ball this evening, when everybody will unmask."

Then was Mr. Kilcammon's opportunity, and he embraced it with a sullen gusto. "Oh, I can tell you about the cap'n!" he proclaimed, with an exultant look at Helen. "I bet he won't deny he didn't come out any better than third. Can't no masks fool anybody that keeps their eyes open!"

Gifford joined in the laughter which this provoked, and then the judge remarked that it was strange no one seemed to know who the successful rider was.

"And Jessie," Helen spoke with animation, "foolish as it may seem, it was really very exciting, particularly at the last, when this gentleman and Phil—of course I recognized Phil—had taken the same and highest number of rings, and it was necessary to order another round to decide between them. The crowd cheered the two as they appeared for the final run. The stranger forced his horse to the top of his speed and dashed at the first ring. It rattled over his lance; so did the second; then the third and fourth were also taken. I was sitting immediately behind the post from which the fifth ring hung, and just before he reached it I thoughtlessly raised my parasol; his horse swerved, and he missed the ring, but got his horse in hand in time to take the last ring. I was extremely mortified, for it did look as if I had intentionally caused the accident in the interest of my brother. I could see that Phil, too, was cut up about what I had done, and he became nervous and excited. He rode furiously, and took the first four rings, but when he came to the fifth, where I was sitting, he passed it deliberately without even trying for it. He missed the next ring, and that ended the contest, although the stranger insisted they should have another round. But Phil would not think of it, and galloped away from the grounds at once. Poor Phil! He had set his heart on winning to-day."

A little later Phil Trenham, booted and

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spurred, strode in. He was a slender young fellow, a year or two older than his sister, with a smooth, olive skin, a small head, flashing eyes, a quick, nervous manner, and in talking ejected his words with the rapidity of a volley of bullets. To judge from his appearance, he was in a frame of mind hardly more pleasant than that of Mr. Wollie Kilcammon himself.

"Oh, I am so sorry, Phil!" was Helen's gentle greeting. "Are you very angry?"

"Not with you, dear," he answered, as his arm rested for an instant around her waist.

"Phil," Helen said solicitously a few moments later, "you haven't had supper yet; won't you come and let me give you something? You'll be late—and you have to dress yet for the ball."

"Oh, don't mind me. I don't know that I shall go at all," moodily.

"But you must go," Gifford insisted. "You forget that it falls to you and me to act as a committee on the part of the conquered 'knights' to escort the hero of the Red Mask to the lady he shall select as his 'Queen.' You must see this thing through with me, old boy."

"You are still vexed, Phil," Helen said anxiously.

"Not about the tournament, Helen. I don't mind being beaten by a rider like that. If I seem a little out of humor it is because one of those infernal carpet-baggers—that fellow Rankin, you know," turning to Gifford—"stopped me in town half an hour ago, and had the impudence to offer to buy a ticket to the ball."

"The presumptuous adventurer!" exclaimed the judge.

"And what did you say to the scoundrel?" inquired Gifford.

"Nothing. I knocked him down."

II

MAVISTOC and vicinity were unusually excited that night; for they had indulged in no dissipation so extravagant as a large ball since the outbreak of the war. It is true that more than two years had passed since Appomattox, but the men of Mavistoc had taken such an active part in the struggle that the war was to the people of that region far more a terrible reality than a memory. Such conditions in no way conduced to social relaxation. But the women of the place wished to raise a fund to buy a piece of ground for a cemetery in which to reinter the Confederate dead who had fallen by the hundreds on Mavistoc's historic battle-field. Hence the tournament and the Tournament Ball.

Wesley.

Although the ball was a public affair, given in the town hall, ample precautions were taken against the attendance of undesirable persons. It was in charge of committees of "arrangements" and "invitation," which were formidable both in numbers and in social standing; and one of the provisions of these committees was that a ticket of admission could be sold to no one who had not either ridden in the tournament or received a formal invitation from the proper committee.

Rodney Holt had been a young officer in the Union army, and had camped a week with his command near Mavistoc about four years prior to the evening on which he found himself at the Mavistoc ball. Riding along the turnpike one day, in front of the Trenham place he had seen Helen Trenham for the first time. Mounted on a spirited mare, the young girl was dashing at full speed across the lawn at a gate closed against an adjoining woodland. But the mare refused to take it, and with ears laid back, swerved from it. Her rider wheeled, evidently for another run, and in doing so passed near Holt, who had stopped to look on.

"I would not try that," Holt suggested; "it is too high for her."

The girl glanced toward him, not having seen him before. There was some surprise, but more disdain, in her eyes, and her only answer was a touch of the whip to the mare.

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About fifty yards from the gate she again turned the mare's head in that direction, but the animal knew what was expected of her and rebelled. She would stand for a moment looking at the gate and trembling; then, as her rider, with will more resolute than her own, urged her forward, she would plunge and rear so frantically that Holt felt strongly tempted to go to her and forcibly lift the girl from the saddle. Suddenly, however, the mare, in obedience to her determined rider, gave a wild sniff and bounded toward the gate. Her effort to leap it was beautiful, but one of her hoofs struck the top rail, and she went down. Holt, leaving his own horse in the road, ran to the gate at once, but when he reached it the girl was already on her feet, and, a little pale, but apparently perfectly calm, was holding the bridle and commanding the mare to rise.

Captain Gifford, late of the C. S. A.

"Don't," Holt said quietly; "both her fore legs are broken."

The girl seemed to stop breathing as she dropped the bridle and bent over the mare; then she shivered as if from a sudden wind, and sank upon her knees with a sob.

Holt waited a little; then he went up to her. "You had better go into the house," he said, "and let me put her out of her pain. Nothing can be done for her."

The girl sprang up with an inarticulate protest upon her lips, whirling and confronting Holt as if to ward off a blow. But in another moment her eyes, flashing upon him with indignation, filled with tears; she turned again to the mare and softly stroked her sheeny neck; then she took the shapely head of the helpless creature between her hands and kissed the white star on her forehead. When next her eyes met Holt's they were as clear as his own, and her hand was steady as she held it out for his pistol. "Give it to me," she said coldly; "no one else shall do it."

She did it well, without an apparent tremor; then she flung the pistol from her, as if it had been searing hot, covered her face with her hands, and, reeling, seemed about to fall, when Holt caught her by the arm. "You must let me take you to the house," he said.

His touch seemed to bring back all her strength. She straightened up at once, glancing at his uniform rather than at him with the same disdain that had shot from her eyes when she had first seen him in the road. "Thank you," calmly; "it is not necessary."

She started to the gate, but seeing the pistol, picked it up and handed it to him before he could prevent her. "Thank you for this, also," she forced herself to say; and then turned her back on him. Holt was quick enough to open the gate for her, and she swept through it and up to the house without looking at him again.

It had all been but a few seconds; but it was long enough for Holt to receive such an impression as no woman had ever made upon him before—an impression which he carried with him afterward through march and camp and battle.

Something over two years after his return home the death of his father left Holt without near family ties, and, settling up his estate, he again turned to the South, with no more definite plans than to go into business there and perhaps to seek out the girl he had seen four years before at the old farmhouse near Mavistoc. Of course it was a romantic piece of folly; but Holt was still young.

Shortly after reaching Mavistoc, on leaving Nashville one day, between which and Mavistoc he, like many others, went to and fro frequently, the realization of Holt's long-cherished dream of again meeting Helen Trenham was most unexpectedly anticipated by a chance collision in the Nashville depot with Alice Dawson, whom he had known as a visitor to friends in Pennsylvania, and who, as he was about boarding the train, almost shoved into his arms, with a hurried word of presentation, the girl who had been so much in his thoughts.

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The hour he spent with Helen Trenham between Nashville and Mavistoc was not altogether as he would have had it. The suddenness of so unforeseen and fortuitous a meeting exhilarated him at first to a point of almost mental irresponsibility, he thought later. But when the subject of the changes in the South resulting from the war came up, her expressions regarding the Northern newcomers, whom she indiscriminately classed as "carpet-baggers," were so full of feeling and so extreme that they brought him abruptly from the clouds, and during the remainder of the journey his talk was irreproachably commonplace. However, it was but a short time before the train reached Mavistoc, and he had assisted her to her carriage and bowed himself formally from her presence.

Within a few days afterward he had bought a farm out on the road on which he had first seen Helen Trenham. It was about a mile beyond the Trenham place, and although this proximity to the Trenhams' perhaps had something to do with his selection, he was materially influenced in making his choice by the possibilities of a water-power in the bend of the river that wound through his land.

Business had kept him well occupied during his first month here, and he had made no effort to seek a more intimate acquaintance with Helen Trenham.

He could not help noting that the people in and around Mavistoc looked rather askance at him, and he felt that in what relations he had with them there was a constraint entirely out of accord with the traditional "Southern hospitality" of which he had heard much. So he wisely concluded not to try to force matters. He would trust to time to set him right before the community. After that he would take his chances with the rest of them as far as Helen Trenham was concerned.

Perhaps this course would in the end have resulted as he wished, if it had not been for the tournament. Perhaps it would have resulted thus in spite of the tournament, if it had not been for the masks. If it had not been for the masks he would never have thought of participating in the joust of these strangers. But the masks offered him security from discovery, and he

Phil Trenham, booted and spurred, strode in.—Page 479.

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felt that with all the contestants masked there was really no impropriety in his trying his skill against them.

And so it ended in Holt's yielding to his not too carefully weighed impulse to don a mask and join in the tourney. But when he had defeated his competitors and won the "Red Mask" he found himself in a dilemma which he had not anticipated. Such a contingency had been so remote that he had not given it a thought, for there were no better horsemen anywhere than these dashing Tennessee centaurs. When he entered the tournament he had no intention of going to the ball; but when, to his surprise, the "Red Mask" was his, he understood that his presence at the ball was more than anything necessary to the success of that affair. Clearly, therefore, having gone so far, there was nothing for him to do but go further. So to the ball he went, rebuking himself for the situation into which his own indiscretion had forced him.

He went, however, with the determination not to unmask. He was aware, it is true, that everyone would be expected to remove his mask after the lancers, but with the lancers Holt's part in the programme would be ended, and while there would, of course, be much curiosity to learn his identity, there was no real reason why he should not leave that curiosity ungratified and slip away, still under the protection of his mask.

Nevertheless, he was far from feeling satisfied with himself. "I wonder," he thought as he wandered from the ballroom, where all eyes were turned upon him, into one of the quieter adjoining apartments, "if men of old did more foolish things for that other Helen than I am doing for this."

Helen.

III

Holt, thinking himself safe from observation here, lifted his mask for a moment and fanned his face with his handkerchief, for the ballroom was close and the mask increased the heat. Quick as was his action, he was not quick enough to escape recognition by an anxious-eyed boy who looked in just then in quest of Helen Trenham.

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As Holt left the room Jessie Barrows and Captain Gifford entered, followed soon by Mr. Kilcammon, with Helen on the proudly projecting angle of his arm. It was evident that he was affected by some unusual excitement. A few minutes before he had discovered the identity of the wearer of the Red Mask, and had hurried away, impatient to reveal his discovery to some of the dignitaries of the Committee of Arrangements; but meeting Helen Trenham, he had forgotten all else. For the fact that she took his arm and walked through the crowded ballroom under his protection, with apparently as much pleasure as if he had been Captain Gifford himself, exalted him to an elevation beneath which all else faded into obscurity. For the moment he was oblivious of the existence of Holt, and even of Captain Gifford. But the disagreeable propinquity of one of these persons was suddenly recalled to his sublimated senses as he beheld Captain Gifford and Miss Barrows directly in his path. He immediately made a motion to turn aside and retreat with his prize; but Helen was bent upon joining the couple, whereupon Mr. Kilcammon, not yet at the end of his resources, abruptly paused. "Now tell me, before we go over there," he said somewhat dictatorially, nodding toward Gifford, "when you're going to dance with me?"

"Why," Helen smiled, "I can give you the lancers. Will that do?"

"Won't it, though!" delighted. "And that's going to be right away." After which he offered no further resistance to joining Captain Gifford and Miss Barrows. In truth, he had an air as if he were capable just then of any extreme of condescension.

"Has anybody seen Phil?" inquired Judge Trenham in a troubled tone, as he came up to the group a moment later. "I understand that fellow Rankin is outside looking for him."

"I am hunting you, Louis," young Trenham, who had followed his father, said to Gifford. "This is the lancers, and we'd better find our man."

"Well, we shall not have far to go; there he is now," Gifford answered, nodding in the direction of the ballroom, across which Holt could be seen making his way.

Phil and Gifford met Holt near the doorway. "Sir," said Phil, bowing before Holt and speaking with something of the grandiose ceremony that was characteristic of his father, "to us falls the pleasant duty, under the rules of our tournament, of conducting you to the lady with whom you would dance the lancers."

"If you would but designate her," added Gifford, also bowing.

Holt acknowledged these courtesies with an inclination which, if less stately than that of Phil and less graceful than that of Gifford, was attributable in part to the preoccupation of his mind in settling a question which the appearance of the two young men made it necessary for him to decide at once. With whom should he dance the lancers? Should he single out Helen Trenham as the "Queen"? She was the queen. That could not be disputed. There was no one present comparable to her. Why should he not dance with her—touch her hand—hear her voice—look into her eyes? He did not propose to unmask, and therefore no sectional prejudices would be ruffled. Some day, when she should know him better, it might be another happiness to tell her what happiness it had given the unknown wearer of the Red Mask to open with her the Tournament Ball. Glancing quickly at Helen, he answered with sudden resolution:

"Certainly, gentlemen, if Miss Trenham will favor me."

Phil and Gifford, on either side of him, escorted him to Helen Trenham, and a rapid murmur ran through the observant spectators as her name was caught up and passed in an undertone from one to another.

"Miss Trenham," Gifford said in his blandest manner, "this gentleman, as is his fortune under the regulations of the evening, begs the privilege of dancing the lancers with you."

"If entirely agreeable to Miss Trenham," qualified Holt, as he bowed.

Helen, with a smile, returned Holt's bow, and saying, "The gentleman does me too much honor," took his proffered arm.

Mr. Kilcammon was aghast as he saw his own prospect of dancing the lancers with Helen so rapidly vanishing. Stepping impetuously forward, he objected in a voice high with indignation.

"But, Miss Helen, this is my dance! You promised it to me—you know you did!"

"My dear Mr. Kilcammon," Gifford in-

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"That there man, ain't nobody but one of them Yankee carpet-baggers!"

terposed, smiling broadly, "no other engagement is permitted to interfere with the rules."

"Wollie," Helen asked soothingly, "will it not suit you as well to wait till the next dance?"

"But, I say, Miss Helen," he protested, hotly, "you wouldn't dance with him, nohow, if you knew who he was!"

"Come, Wollie," Phil said, taking him by the arm to draw him out of the way, "you don't know what you are talking about."

"I reckon I do know what I'm talkin' about, too!" the boy cried shrilly. "That there man," pointing to Holt, "ain't nobody but one of them Yankee carpet-baggers! I saw him with his mask off this very night!"

There was a hush among the guests, which was quickly broken by Phil. "A carpet-bagger? Impossible!" he exclaimed incredulously.

"Wollie, I'm astonished at you!" was the judge's stern reproof.

Helen looked in bewilderment from one to another, and almost unconsciously withdrew her hand from Holt's arm.

Then Holt removed his mask, saying, calmly: "My name is Rodney Holt. If the fact that my residence until a few weeks ago was in Pennsylvania makes me a carpet-bagger, then I must plead guilty to the charge."

For a moment there was silence. Helen's lips parted, but no words came from them. Her eyes sought Holt's with a look of startled reproach, which gave way to one of cold resentment. Then Phil snatched his mask from his face and quickly stepping in front of Holt, said fiercely:

"The boy was right, then!"

"Come, Helen," Judge Trenham commanded with authority as he offered his daughter his arm.

"Mr. Holt will excuse me," Helen said, with a stiff little bow, taking her father's arm.

"We'll settle this later," Holt was coolly informed by Gifford, after which the captain turned his attention to wide-eyed Jessie Barrows.

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"We'll settle it now," Phil cried, dashing his mask to the floor and confronting Holt furiously.

"O Phil!" Helen pleaded, turning anxiously from her father to her brother.

"Philip!" the judge ordered sonorously; "remember where you are, sir."

"You are right, father," Phil answered. "You," glaring at Holt, "shall hear from me to-morrow!"

IV

A WEEK had passed, and Holt was not slow in forming a pretty fair idea of the estimation in which he was held, after the incident of the ball, by the people of Mavistoc. He had left the ball shortly after Helen Trenham had declined to dance with him, and as he made his way through the throng he would have known, though his eyes had been closed, that men scowled at him ominously and that Madonna-faced women drew their skirts aside for him to pass. During the week that followed he realized fully that now, at least for a time, there could be nothing but ostracism for him in the community of which he had wished to become a respected member. With the exception of the postmaster, who was himself a Northern man, and the negroes whom Holt had put to work on his place, he had exchanged words with no one who had not evinced toward him chilling disapproval and suspicion. Once a group of small boys, undeterred by the considerations which made their seniors more circumspect, jeered at him openly as he rode through the town; and at another time, as he dismounted to get his mail, a florid-faced young man, who had served on one of the ball committees, had seized a whip from a buggy and started toward Holt in a threatening manner, when older by-standers interposed and led the rash youngster away.

Holt had seen none of the Trenhams again; but early on the morning after the ball he had received and ignored a challenge from Phil. Even if Holt had held the "Code" in more respect it is doubtful if he would have cared to fight in defence of the piece of harmless folly which he had perpetrated, and which had been so seriously misconstrued.

But the challenge from Phil Trenham was not the only one which Holt ignored. For a negro, clad in the voluminous cast-off uniform of a Federal soldier, and disclosing himself as the Reverend Tobe Dunnaway, appeared as the bearer of a formidable-looking paper, which might have suggested a legal document if it had been legal cap instead of foolscap, and if the upper right-hand corner had not been carefully turned down. Holt opened it, and deciphering the stilted and involved phraseology, learned that he had insulted a lady at the Tournament Ball while she was under the protection of Mr. Wolworth P. Kilcammon, who, demanding the only satisfaction which a gentleman could accept under such circumstances, awaited an apology or the name of his representative with whom further communication could be held. Holt inquired of the Reverend Tobe Dunnaway who Mr. Wolworth P. Kilcammon was, and being enlightened on that point, carefully placed Mr. Kilcammon's cartel in his pocket for preservation among his most valued curios.

Meanwhile Holt went on with his preparations for building his modest cedar-ware factory. However different from what he desired they should be were his relations with the people of Mavistoc, he harbored no thought of abandoning the field on which he had made such an inauspicious beginning. After the ball there was more reason than ever for his remaining at Mavistoc and demonstrating by his course that he was not the adventurer he had been assumed to be. Even Helen Trenham should in time come to understand that it would not be considered an affront for him to ask her to dance with him.

To no one was this sensational incident of the Tournament Ball of more concern than to Mr. Wolworth P. Kilcammon. Holt having failed to give Mr. Kilcammon "satisfaction," there was no recourse left to that gentleman but to post him as "a coward and a poltroon." Mr. Kilcammon accordingly drew up one of his impressive manuscripts, in which, after reciting the transmission and declination of his demand for redress, he formally branded Rodney Holt as "a Coward and a Poltroon." And that was a proud hour in the life of Mr. Kilcammon when, surcharged with the tidings which were not only to console beauty in distress, but to demonstrate his own adequacy as beauty's champion, he

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hastened to Helen Trenham and showed her this conclusive paper.

But in some way—he was not able to say in what—his reception by her was not what he had expected. He was not sure, but he had an impression that there was a lack of that cordiality in her manner which had always marked it before. Indeed, much to his astonishment and displeasure, she took occasion to say to him that if he really wished to serve her he would neither concern himself nor speak about what had happened at the ball; whereupon, retaining possession of his poster and excusing herself, she sent him away with a melancholy feeling of undeserved inappreciation, his heart aching with a dull suspicion that Captain Gifford had taken an unfair advantage of him and poured some poisonous slander into the ears of the only woman he could ever love.

The unpropitious aspect which Mr. Kilcammon was compelled to acknowledge his suit had assumed—and that, too, at the very juncture when his prospects of success ought to have been most dazzling—plunged him into a state of restless desperation which only ingulfed him the more deeply because, feeling that he must do something, and do it at once, he did not know what to do. It was fully an hour now before he could go to sleep after getting in bed. Aunt Viny, the cook, began to deliver ominous auguries based upon his decreased consumption of hot biscuits and waffles. The frequency with which he surreptitiously applied his father's razor to that part of his face corresponding to that of Captain Gifford's which was concealed by a flowing mustache, was significant of some new impulse of fierce determination. But more significant, perhaps, than any of these things was the espionage which he set upon Captain Gifford. For whatever the cause of his trouble was, Mr. Kilcammon was convinced that his older and taller and more hirsute rival was at the bottom of it. Accordingly he began to keep a sharper eye than ever upon the captain's movements; and especially did he dedicate himself to the task of seeing that Gifford should be as little as possible alone with Helen Trenham.

So it happened that the first time after the establishment of this espionage that Gifford rode by the Kilcammon place toward the Trenhams', the dust stirred up by his horse

Mr. Kilcammon accordingly drew up one of his impressive manuscripts.—Page 486.

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had not settled before Mr. Kilcammon, with rapid strides and compressed lips, was hot upon his trail.

He had not run more than two hundred yards when he came in sight of Gifford and Phil Trenham, sitting on their horses beneath the trees, leisurely engaged in conversation. There being no pressing reason why Mr. Kilcammon should continue his journey to the Trenhams' while Captain Gifford was loitering in the shade, and being troubled with no scruples against eavesdropping, he crept through the undergrowth at the roadside until he reached a position where he could hear much that was being said. One of the first things that he made out was, to his satisfaction, that Gifford was not going to the Trenhams' now that he had met Phil. What he heard next, however, was not so much to Mr. Kilcammon's liking. Indeed, as, with expanding eyes and mouth, he gradually realized its full import, he was anything but pleased; for Gifford and Phil were discussing a plan, which had evidently been considered before their present meeting, to "settle" with Rodney Holt. No direr disaster could befall Mr. Kilcammon than that Captain Gifford, of all human beings, should participate in any such plan. The only consolation which this newly impending trouble had for Mr. Kilcammon was that the scheme, as revealed in the discussion of Gifford and Phil, was to be carried out in strict secrecy, with the disclosure of no one who was to take part in it. Perhaps Helen would not know, therefore, of her indebtedness to Gifford for avenging her. But, again, perhaps she would. Gifford, Mr. Kilcammon believed, would stop at nothing to further his suit; and it would be very easy for him to hint to Helen what he might conceal from all others.

Then it was that the very secrecy of Gifford's and Phil's plan suggested a brilliant idea to Mr. Kilcammon. He stole away softly, and, hastening home, went straight to his room, where he spread out a fresh sheet of paper and proceeded to work with the frenzy of inspiration and desperation, his knees drawn strenuously together, and his tongue forcing a resolute bulge into his flushed cheek.

Never before had one of Wolworth P. Kilcammon's laboriously prepared letters been constructed in so short a time; for in less than an hour after sitting down to his task he had completed it, even to the proper plicature of the upper right-hand corner.

V

BETWEEN eight and nine o'clock that evening Wesley raised one of the windows in order to close the lattice blinds of what was known as the "sitting-room" at the Trenhams'. The full moon was shining. "Whut dat!" he exclaimed. "Fer de lan' sake! ef 'tain't dat onery nigger preacher, Tobe Dunnaway!" reassured. "When I sees dat triflin' varmunt I 'lows dat de shortis' way fum de meetin'-'ouse is by de nighis' hen-'ouse."

The Reverend Tobe Dunnaway, stopping just beyond the trellis of honeysuckles, remarked, after asking and answering solicitous inquiries as to individual and family health:

"I des come over fer to fetch dis-yer letter to Miss Helen fum Wollie Kickammon. Wollie, he wuz in sicher stew he say he gwiner give me a bee-gum hat if I bring de letter, en I made up my mine I gwiner have dat bee-gum, Klu-Kluxes er no Klu-Kluxes. Say, Brer Trenham," with a new impetus of interest, "whut is all dish yer talk I hear tell on 'bout Miss Helen weedin' sich er wide row at dat-ar ball de yuther night?"

"Heh? Ain't you heerd how dat wuz?" Wesley replied, with responsive animation. "Law, chile, Miss Helen she sutny is too proud fer to dance wid Mr. Anybody en Mr. Ev'ybody. Dat man at de ball—dey calls him Mr. Red Mas' er Mr. Blue Mas', er sumpn lak dat—no wonder he wanter dance wid Miss Helen! He wanter dance wid Miss Helen so bad he come up to her en he say, 'Lady,' he say, 'you mighty han'some en you mighty proud, but ef you'll dance des one set wid me I'll crown you de Queen er de Worl'.' En den he lif' up de crown en start fer to put it on her head; den Miss Helen, mon! she fling up her head lak a race-hawss, she did, en she say, mighty stiff en mighty ca'm, 'You mistaken in de lady, suh!' En wid dat she des fahly——"

"Wesley, what are you doing here?"

It was Helen who had entered the room in time to hear the conclusion of this miraculous narrative. "Close the window, and be sure you never repeat that absurd story!"

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"No'm," Wesley answered, crestfallen. Then, giving the letter to her, he sidled out of the room through a door opening into the yard.

Helen was more affected by his tale than Wesley had suspected. It was bad enough to figure in a vulgar scene at a public ball; it was inexpressibly humiliating to be the subject, not only of the neighborhood's gossip, but of the servants' tattle. Why did that man ever come to Mavistoc? Why did he force her to do that—wretched thing? "I hate him!" was her thought, throwing herself into a chair and crumpling Wollie Kilcammon's letter unconsciously with tightening fingers.

After a little she aroused herself, and began, somewhat indifferently at first, to read it:

Compliments of Mr. Wolworth P. Kilcammon to Miss Helen Trenham.

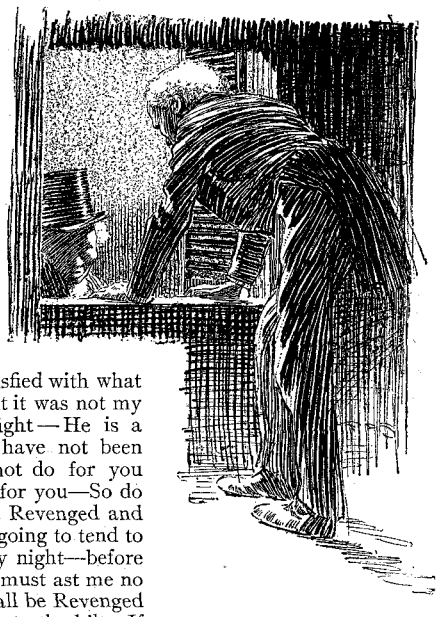
From the Cold way you ackted the last time I was at your house you did not seem sattisfied with what I had done to Revenge you. But it was not my fault if that fellow would not fight—He is a coward and a Poltroon—But I have not been idle—There is nothing I would not do for you—even I would risk my own life for you—So do not be discurraged—You shall be Revenged and this very night—Your friends are going to tend to the case of Rodney Holt this very night—before day-break—It is a secret and you must ast me no Questions—But I Promise you shall be Revenged—An eye for an eye and the knife to the hilt—If you don't believe me ask Phil in the morning. But you must not mention my name to any one. It is a secret and a Oath—If you want to prove it, watch and you will see the Ku-Klux go up the road towards Holt's house this very night—No more at present as it is time for us to Ackt—

I Remain
Most Respectfully
Yr. obedient servant,
WOLWORTH P. KILCAMMON.

Helen's expression, at first of indifference, then of perplexity, was of startled horror as she finished reading the letter. Her friends would attend to the case of Rodney Holt that night—a secret—Phil—the Ku-Klux. Impossible! They would not do such a thing! They must not!

But if they should attempt it? How could they be prevented? She arose, and hastening to a window, looked nervously out. It was early yet—it could not be too late. But what could she do? Pshaw! this fear of hers was foolish. They could not mean to commit this crime. It was all the wild fancy of a boy.

But Phil? Where was he? He was hot-blooded and headstrong. He had been at home but little since the night of the ball. That very evening he had come in for a few minutes and had hurried away again, hardly remaining long enough to drink a cup of coffee. She recalled now that he seemed affected by some unusual excitement. Could he have contemplated——



"Whut is all dish yer talk I hear?"—Page 488.

At that instant the door through which Wesley had departed a few moments before was thrown open and Wesley himself, his eyes dilated with fright, rushed into the room. "Lawdy-mussy, Miss Helen, I done seed um! I done seed um!" He spoke rapidly and tremulously. "My lan'! is I done forgot to fasten dat do'?" turning back quickly and springing both lock and bolt. "But dey ain't no bolts ner bars kin keep *dem* out when dey wanter come in."

"What is the matter?" Helen inquired in astonishment.

"Bless de lamb! ain't I done tole you yit? Hit's de Klu-Kluxes, Miss Helen—I done seed um wid my own eyes!"

"Where?—when?" Helen asked.

"Des now, when I wuz watchin' Tobe. Tobe, when he come to de watermillion patch he sorter stop en look jubously at dat las' little runt watermillion; den all at oncet he look up de road, en de nex' minute dat nigger wuz zoonin' th'ough de cawnfiel', lippity-clip, lak a country-dawg gittin' outn town. Den I looks up de road to see whut de matter, en, name er Gawd! dah

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dey wuz—Klu-Kluxes sho's you bawn—mighty nigh ez tall ez de stable roof, a-ridin' 'long de road, en breavin' smoke fum dey noses, en dey eyes shinin' lak jackerlantuns, en——"

"How many were there?" Helen interrupted.

"I seed two un um."

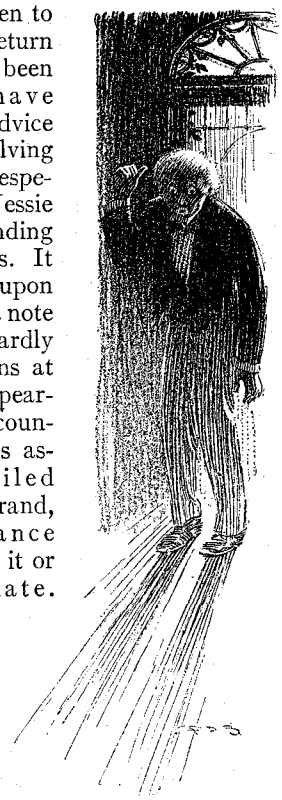
"Were they going up the road toward—toward Mr. Holt's, or the other way?"

"Dey wuz gwine de yuther way. I reckon dey wuz gwine to Shady Holler, caze soon's I see um I drapt down in de fence-cornder, en ez dey pass by, one un um I hear him say to de yuther, he say, 'Is you done sho dey all know de meetin'-place is Shady Holler?'"

Helen walked to the window and back, wringing her hands absently. Then, apparently after a brief hesitation, she said: "Go to your cabin."

She was left in agitated indecision. Something must be done, and at once. Holt must be warned; but how? There was no one whom she could consult. Judge Trenham had driven to Mavistoc, and would not return until late; but if he had been at home Helen would have shrunk from seeking his advice in such an emergency involving a "carpet-bagger," and especially Rodney Holt. Even Jessie Barrows was absent, spending the night with other friends. It would be unsafe to rely upon any of the negroes to take a note to Holt, for they would hardly venture out of their cabins at night since the reported appearance of Ku-Klux in the country; and if any of Wesley's associates could be prevailed upon to start on the errand, there could be no assurance that he would not shirk it or procrastinate it until too late. Whatever was to be done, therefore, Helen realized must be done by herself.

She hurried to her own room and threw open her writing-desk. She placed a chair beside it; but she hesitated, with a slight recoil of aversion before seating herself. Then she glanced at the clock, pressed her hands for a second to her burning cheeks, sat down, wrote half a dozen anonymous lines, threw a long cloak over her shoulders and a heavy veil over her head, and hastened down-stairs and out of the house.



"Klu-Kluxes sho's you bawn."

She walked fast—she felt that she could not walk too fast if she was not to waver in her purpose—and going directly to Wesley's cabin, was about to call him to accompany her when it rushed upon her that the mission which she was undertaking was one that every consideration for herself dictated should best be performed in secret. She was overwhelmed with a sense of humiliation that she was about to do clandestinely what she would not have her servants suspect. She passed and left Wesley's cabin as if it had been a plague-spot, and at the moment her heart was filled with bitter resentment against Holt.

Reaching the public road, she turned in the direction of Holt's, a mile away. Her steps were rapid, her cloak was drawn closely about her, and her head was bent forward, as if she were facing a strong wind, although the night was still. She had gone about half the distance when she was startled into a nervous ejaculation by a brown shadow which shot across the road at her feet. It was only a fox but the suddenness of the apparition set her heart to beating painfully, and she stopped and pressed her hand tightly to her breast.

She started on again, but before she had gone more than twenty steps, and before she had recovered from the shock which the fox had given her, she stopped abruptly as she heard the hoof-beats of horses up the road, in front of her. They were fearfully distinct to her alarmed sense of hearing, and it soon became evident that they were rapidly approaching. It seemed for a little as if she had lost the power of motion; then she ran from the road to one side and concealed herself among the

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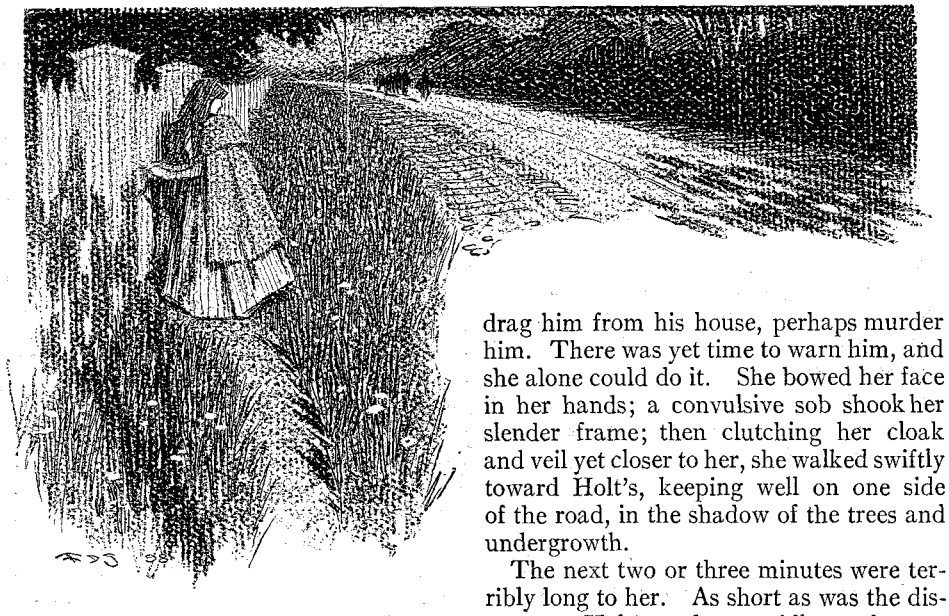

Glancing over her shoulder she saw that they were so near.—Page 492.

bordering bushes until the horsemen came up and passed. These she recognized as the physician of the neighborhood and a boy who had probably summoned him to a professional call. Her heart was beating audibly, and she had scarcely dared to breathe until the danger of discovery by them was over; but when it was over, the apprehension of her true situation, alone at night on this country road, pressed upon her with new and dismaying force. She shrank farther back into the bushes. The rustle of a falling leaf caused her to start timorously, and at the fluttering of a bird she drew her veil spasmodically closer about her face.

What was she to do? Should she turn back, leaving her warning undelivered? If she should be seen and recognized? How could she go on, alone, and to his house, of all men's? She had intended slipping to the door, ringing, leaving the note and hurrying away before anyone could answer the bell; but suppose someone should see her? Why should she risk everything—anything—for him? It was impossible! She would return home at once.

She stepped hastily from her hiding-place and started homeward, but she had gone but a few yards before she suddenly halted again. They would overpower Holt, drag him from his house, perhaps murder him. There was yet time to warn him, and she alone could do it. She bowed her face in her hands; a convulsive sob shook her slender frame; then clutching her cloak and veil yet closer to her, she walked swiftly toward Holt's, keeping well on one side of the road, in the shadow of the trees and undergrowth.

The next two or three minutes were terribly long to her. As short as was the distance to Holt's and as rapidly as she was lessening it, it seemed to her that she would never reach her destination. Her senses were preternaturally acute, and the slightest sound smote her ominously, notwithstanding that she bent her head forward, muffled as it was, determined to hear nothing, see nothing, that could retard or prevent the completion of her mission.

But attempt to shut out all sounds as she would, she gradually became conscious of the rhythmical clank of—was it—could it be the tramp of metal-shod horses galloping over the macadamized road?

She stopped sharply and listened. The sound was distinct now. The noise was made not by one or two, but probably a dozen horses, and they seemed to be coming toward her over the road behind her. She grew faint as she realized that in that direction lay Shady Hollow, and she scanned with straining eyes the turnpike, which stretched back like a white line of fog in the moonlight. She did not look long, for she soon discovered a dark shadow moving along the white line, which confirmed too well her fears that a body of mounted men was nearing her. With a low moan that might have been the voice of both terror and prayer, she turned and ran on toward Holt's. Once she stumbled and almost fell, but she caught herself and rushed on the faster. Again a thorn-bush pulled at her cloak, but she tore on with a despera-

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tion that rent the garment to the hem. The clatter of the horses was becoming appallingly close, and glancing over her shoulder, she saw that they were so near that their ghastly disguises were vividly visible. The sight almost drove hope from her, and she felt that in a few steps more she would sink to the ground. But a few steps more revealed to her the lights gleaming in Holt's windows, and she fled on toward them with new courage. In another half-minute she had reached and passed through the gate, and even as she heard with sharp distinctness the guarded voices of the night-riders as they closed in behind her, she saw before her the figure of a man standing against one of the illuminated windows.

VI

HOLT was seated at a table in a room on the ground-floor of his house, looking over some drawings of the factory he proposed building, when the stillness of the night was broken by a noise like the tramp of cavalry. Crossing to one of the windows and looking out, he saw a woman running toward the gate, followed, not more than two hundred yards down the road, by a body of mounted men.

The woman came on through the gate and fled up the walk toward the house. Holt hastened to the door opening from the hall, and as he reached it the front door of the house, not yet locked for the night was flung ajar and the woman, her face concealed by a veil, ran in and, seeing him, suddenly stopped, catching at the balustrade of the stairway as if to prevent herself from sinking to the floor.

"Escape at once!" he heard her say breathlessly as he hurried to her.

"What is the matter?" he asked, drawing her into the room and assisting her to a chair. He was sensitive of the pitiable tremors which moved her as he supported her; he felt that she shrank from him, although for the moment she was so weak from fright and exhaustion that she would have fallen without his help.

"Oh!" she cried; "can you not understand? They are coming to—to take you!"

"What do you mean? Impossible!" Holt answered incredulously.

All her strength seemed to return to her. Springing from her chair, she seized him by the arm and led him to the window. "Look!" she appealed to him; "do you not see them?"

"Those men are coming here!" he exclaimed. "Why do they pursue you?"

"It is not I—it is you they want! You have not a moment to lose!"

Holt began to apprehend. "This is outrageous," he answered, "and I shall not try to avoid them. But you? They must not find you here."

"Don't mind me! They won't harm me! Go, go!" she besought him earnestly.

"And leave you to that mob? I won't think of it!"

"Then take me away—quick!"

"Come, then; perhaps, I can get you out this way."

He started with her to the hall door, thinking it possible to leave the house from the rear before any of the men in front should enter. But he was too late. Before he reached the door it was opened from the hall, then closed again, and two masked figures swathed in robes, stood confronting him.

"Not so fast, please," one of them said. "We have a little business with you first," removing his mask and disclosing the smooth, dark face of Phil Trenham.

If Holt was surprised he did not betray it, as he simply replied: "I am not aware of having any business with Mr. Trenham."

"Perhaps you would prefer to hear of that business without the presence of a lady," Phil suggested, with a glance toward Helen.

Holt followed his glance; then going over to Helen, he spoke gently to her in an undertone. "Will you not step into the next room?" he asked. "It is best that you should."

"No, no! I will remain here," she replied decisively.

"But you may be recognized," Holt insisted, "and think what that might mean for you."

"Yes, yes! I have thought of all that. But I will stay."

There was a determination in her voice which convinced Holt that it would be a waste of time to urge her further, and leaving her, he again addressed Phil:

"You can have nothing to say to me which a lady cannot hear."

"As you please," Phil answered. "You

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know very well why I am here. At the ball you insulted my sister. I demanded satisfaction. You refused it. Outside are a dozen men, every one of whom hates a carpet-bagger and a coward. As you declined to settle this affair like a man, you must settle it like a craven. What do you say to a rawhide, a coat of tar and feathers, and if that be insufficient, a rope and the limb of a tree?"

"So that is the entertainment to which you have called to invite me?" Holt said, with the trace of a smile.

"Ah! you catch my meaning, do you? Well, you shall have one more chance. Fight me here and now, and the score shall be wiped out. If you consent, those men outside shall be sent away at once."

"Very well," Holt answered; "it is easier to fight one man than a dozen. But I protest against it as foolish, barbarous, and causeless."

"All right. Louis," he turned to Gifford, who had also unmasked, "you may go now and send the boys home.

And you need not return. Holt and I can attend to this matter alone."

"Please have your friend remain," Holt objected. "I prefer a witness to this business."

"Just as you like. What is your choice of weapons?" Phil asked curtly.

"It is immaterial."

"Will pistols suit you?"

"If you have one to spare."

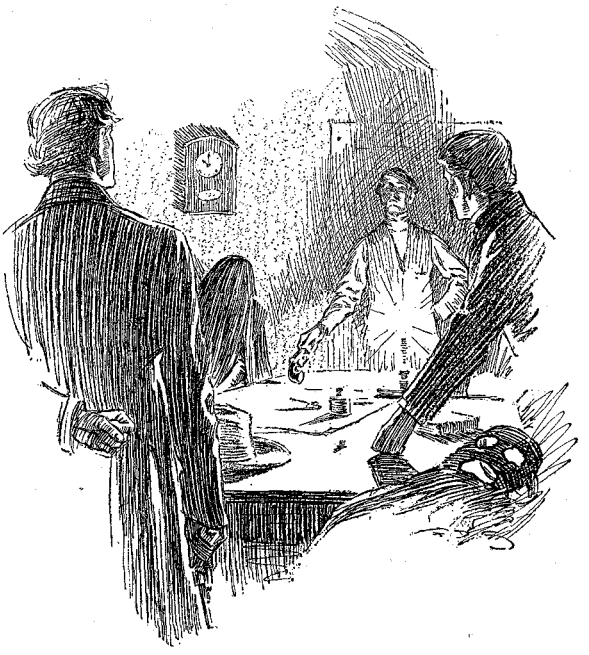
"Let me have yours, Louis," Phil said, taking Gifford's revolver. "This is irregular," to Holt; "but you refused to fight regularly. However, if you have a friend in reach I am willing to wait until you can send for him."

"It is not necessary," Holt answered indifferently.

"As you please. These are exactly alike," Phil said, placing his own pistol and that of Gifford on a table. "Examine them if you wish, and take your choice."

Holt picked up the pistol which happened to be the nearer to him, and stood, looking in an inquiring way at Phil.

That young man took the other pistol from the table, and receding a few paces, explained: "We will stand at opposite sides of the room, with our pistols thus," dropping his, muzzle downward, to his side. "Captain Gifford will count three; or, better still," as there sounded the slight whir which preceded by two or three minutes the striking of the clock, "I see your clock there is on the point of striking ten. Captain Gifford or yourself will count the strokes, and on the tenth stroke we may begin firing and continue as long as there is a load in our pistols. If that does not suit you, name any conditions you prefer."



"I shall not fight, Mr. Trenham."—Page 494.

"I am satisfied!" Holt assented.

"This is horrible! You must not!" It was a low cry of fear, supplication, and command which came from Helen.

Holt went to her again and said gently, but imperatively: "You must withdraw. It will be safer in every way."

"No, no!" she answered quickly. "I will not leave this room unless you promise me not to fight that boy."

"I must fight the boy or a mob," he said, as if to end the discussion. "Come," courteously but peremptorily, "I cannot permit you to remain in here longer." He took

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her by the arm to lead her to the door of the adjoining room. But she drew back, and he held her with a closer grasp as he felt her falter, it seemed from weakness.

For a little she was silent, her head drooping over her stirring breast, her hands gripping each other convulsively. Then the clock began striking slowly, and the voice of Gifford counting the strokes rang out clearly.

"The lady will stand out of the way!" called Phil sharply.

Helen, with a quick movement, turned her back to the others and suddenly raising her face to Holt, for one fleeting instant lifted her veil. "If his sister entreats you?" she almost sobbed.

Holt's hand dropped like lead from her arm, as her tearful eyes flashed upon him. It was but a glimpse of those eyes that he caught, but he stood staring at the veiled head like one stupefied.

It was as if he was aroused by the click of Phil's pistol and the voice of Gifford as he counted, "Six."

"Of course it shall be as you wish," he said to Helen softly. "Be seated, please," placing a chair for her.

His eyes lingered on her reverentially as she obeyed him. Then, as Gifford called out "Eight," Holt stepped quickly to the table and threw the revolver upon it. "I shall not fight Mr. Trenham," he declared. His voice had rather the ring of a victor just from battle.

Phil uncocked his pistol. "Coward!" and his curving lips vividly expressed the intensity of his scorn. "I am sick of this, and I am done with it. I am going now to turn you over to men who know how to deal with your kind! Come on, Louis!"

He strode toward the hall-door, but before he reached it Helen had glided forward and stood confronting him, her back against the closed door. "You shall not!" she said in a low voice, vibrant with the intensity of the strain upon her.

Holt hurried to her. "Say nothing, and come with me," he urged her, with something of the tone he might have used in speaking to a frightened child. But she neither answered him nor looked at him.

Phil, thus checked, gazed at Helen for a second in surprised silence. Then he broke into a boyish laugh. "We can't force a barricade like that, Louis," he said. "Here—we'll go out by the other door."

He started across the room, but Helen rushed after him and laid a detaining hand on his arm. "You shall not send those men here!" she panted.

Phil looked down on her and smiled. "Sorry to disoblige you, madam," he replied, "but those men will be in this room in just about sixty seconds."

"Then—" her words seemed to choke her; she receded a step, but immediately, as if by a supreme effort, drew herself rigidly erect before him—"then they shall find *me* here!" flinging aside her veil and fully revealing her deadly pale face.

"You!" was the only utterance that Phil's lips could find in his astonished horror, followed by Gifford's amazed "Helen!"

Recovering somewhat from the first stunning effect of Helen's revelation, Phil's face was a purple distortion of passion, as with fierce intensity he demanded:

"What does this mean?"

"It means," Helen answered, standing straight and defiant, "that I discovered your foolish plans and came here to give warning of them."

"And you did this to prevent your brother from punishing the man who had insulted you!"

"To prevent him from committing a mad crime."

"It was on *my* account that you came, then!" sneered Phil. "And you show your consideration for me, for father, by threatening to expose yourself here and bring disgrace upon yourself and your family!"

Helen, impulsively throwing her arms around his neck, spoke with quick tenderness. "O Phil, do not talk so!" she pleaded. "Give up this wild scheme! Send those men away and take me home!"

"Helen," Phil responded more softly, "you are excited. You don't know what you are doing. Let Louis take you home, and leave me to settle this matter in the way I think best for your own and my honor."

"You will promise to send those men away and attempt no violence yourself?"

"Send the men away? Yes. But you must leave the rest to me."

Helen withdrew from him, and with a resolution which it would have been impossible to doubt, said, "Then I refuse to go."

"Let me entreat, Miss Trenham," Holt begged earnestly.

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"Very well." The boy was now quivering and white. "There is only one end for such dishonor, and I am going to kill you both."

As he drew his pistol Holt sprang toward him, but Gifford was ahead of the Pennsylvanian. Seizing young Trenham before his trembling finger could press the trigger, and clutching his throat with one hand, with the other he wrenched the revolver from his grasp, bending him against the wall with a force that could have snapped his neck like a twig.

Phil was powerless. He made no attempt to resist; indeed, he seemed to have no thought or desire to resist Gifford, but, as the captain released him, stood with hanging head against the wall.

"Philip," Gifford spoke, almost in his usual suave tones, "I am amazed at you. If you forget that this is your sister, I cannot permit you to forget that it is the lady whom I have asked to be my wife."

Phil raised his eyes to Gifford's sullenly, but was silent. "It should not be necessary," Gifford continued, "for Miss Trenham to offer any explanation of her conduct to anyone, but the explanation she has chosen to make to you is certainly ample. Now be off with you, old chap; get the boys away, and," turning to Helen, "I hope Miss Trenham will grant me the pleasure of seeing her home?"

He bent over her hand and touched it with his lips, while her eyes grew mistily grateful.

An hour later Holt arose from the chair on which he had been sitting motionless since he had been left alone. "He has asked her to be his wife," he said, gathering up the drawings which had been lying upon the table; "but she is not yet his wife. She is worth trying for, and I shall try."

VII

It was three years later that Mavistoc had its second and last Tournament Ball. Holt was again present; but it was by formal invitation of the management. He was talking to Judge Trenham and Helen. Near by Gifford was saying fine things to Jessie Barrows. The musicians struck up the lancers, and soon the new winner of the Red Mask came forward. Flanked on both sides by his escort, he went straight to Jessie Barrows and bore her off triumphantly, after one fierce glance at Gifford.

"Did you recognize him, Louis?" the judge called.

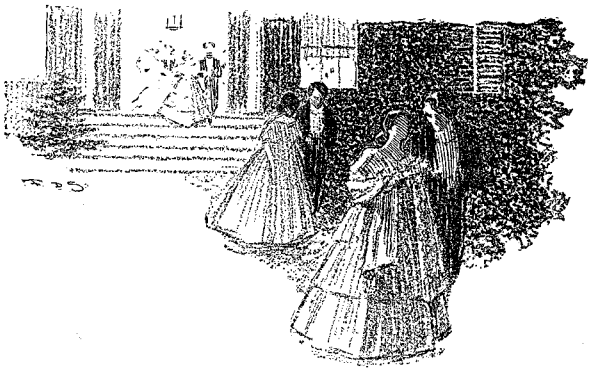
"Sh!" Gifford laughed. "It was none other than my relentless rival, Wolworth P. Kilcammon."

"And it is the lancers, Miss Trenham." Holt turned to Helen with a smiling look of entreaty and inquiry.

"Yes, Helen," the judge said in his stateliest manner, "and I think you owe it to Mr. Holt, if he will dance it with you now."

She answered Holt's smile with another in the quick glance she gave him. "I wonder if he will?" she challenged him with a bright bravado, but her eyes fell and the color stole into her face.

Holt almost sprang to her side, and as he led her away to the dancers he stooped and said something which the judge did not hear. But the judge's eyes were following them, and the judge's eyes were better than his ears. "Well," he sighed, stroking his beard, "he's a mighty fine fellow, even if he was born on the wrong side of the Ohio River."



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THE FLEET

OFF THE COAST OF VIRGINIA

By Samuel McCoy

Illustrations by W. J. Aylward

"Seeing honour is our lives' ambition, and our ambition after death to have an honourable memory of our life."—Captain John Smith.

In the darkness before dawn
I awoke from out my sleep,
Where I slept upon the land,
And I knew that sleep was gone;
For I heard the restless deep
Run swift along the sand,
Ebb, and return once more;
And I felt the cool, soft breeze
Blowing upon my face
And I rose and sought the shore,
Where the recurrent seas,
Like horses, ran their race;
The gray robes of the fog
Heaved with the heaving swells,
And darkness lay around;
But I heard some old sea-dog,
Close inshore, call, "Six bells!"
And I heard the muffled sound
Of oars, and, farther out,
A rattling anchor chain
And the wash against some hulk,
And, fainter still, a shout . . .
And the Fleet slept again.

But a gray, shadowy bulk,
A phantom from the wrack,
Which broke to let it through,
Took sudden shape and came
Upon the ground-swell's back
Straight toward me, and I knew,
Like a familiar name,
The pinnace, English-built,
Three hundred years ago!
Her banked oars rose and dipped
(To an ancient, deep-sea lilt)
As a boat-crew *used* to row!
And like one the oars were shipped
As they ran her on the beach;
And I saw the leathern skin
And the earrings and the queues
Of the tars who manned her—each
Hailing *me* as of their kin;
And I knew what mighty cruise
These rough mates were landing from;
And my blood rushed to my cheek
And I blessed them on my knees;
As a soldier at the drum
Thrills, I thrilled at sight of these
And I wept, and could not speak!

Do you ask me whence they came?
And American you too?
They the men of Sunken Fleets,
Men that swept the seas like flame,
English-brave and English-true!
From the cliffs where Cornwall meets
The Atlantic's endless foam,
From the old sea-towns of Devon
And the shifting sands of Dee,
Where the petrel has her home,
And the storm cloud splits with levin,
Came these bullies of the sea!

And they passed me close at hand,
And their captains, whom at first
Had been hidden from my view,
Paced along the wet sea-sand
Arm in arm, with many a burst

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Drawn by W. J. Aylward.

And I knew what mighty cruise
These rough mates were landing from.

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Of laughter which the salt breeze blew
Toward me, from their bearded throats.
(Never more shall be such gain
As I count this, to have seen
All the captains of the boats
First to dare the unmapped main
And court danger like a queen!)

Do you ask me who they were,
And American you, too?
These were they who laughed at death
And laid down their lives for Her,
Greatest England ever knew,
Maiden Queen, Elizabeth!
And they named the land they found
For the Virgin Queen, Good Bess,
Great Virginia, the proud!
Slight indeed or risk or wound
For such lands and loveliness!

First of all among the train,
Named like a trumpet-call to charge,
Was Sir Walter *Raleigh*, Knight,
"Shepherd of the Ocean Plain,"
First to crave the sandy marge
Of Virginia, first whose sight
Foretold the great state to be;
And his fine hands rested on
Two friends' shoulders — two whose deeds
Shall be sung unceasingly:
Drake, who struck th' Armada down!
Grenville, whose great sea-fight leads
All the fights on sea or shore!
These the Three Great Admirals
(Laughing like three clear-eyed boys)
Who shall live forever more!
On whose names the sailor calls
In the gale or battle-noise!

And there passed among the van
Old Sir Thomas Gates, the dam
Of the foundling colony;
Sir George Somers, Gentleman,
Who was on the shore a lamb,
But a lion on the sea;
Robert Hunt, the old sea-saint;
Tanned with each sea wind that blows,
Mate Bartholomew Gosnold—
Sailormen without a taint,
Better men as friends than foes—
God gave them the sea to hold!

Last of all the Atlantic's brood,
Came from out the sea-fog's pall,
Voyager and fighting-man,
Captain *John Smith*, plain and rude.
Last and greatest of them all—
First and true American!

So, before the fog had fled
At the dawn, they passed from sight
And their bold staves died away,
But still rang within my head
Each adventure and sea fight
That shall *never* pass away!
"Be of good cheer," one had said
As he bade his men good-by,
"Heaven's as near by sea as land!"
And the old fire is not dead,
And the brave shall never die,
While the land they found shall stand!

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Drawn by W. J. Aylward.

These were they who laughed at death
And laid down their lives for Her.

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"LISTENING" ON THE STAGE

By James L. Ford

AN extremely beautiful woman, famous, if the constant reiteration of her in newspaper columns and name on clacking tongues can make one famous, and ardent in her expressions of love for the broad land in which she had already passed nearly a fortnight, was making her first bid for popularity on the American stage. Her advent had been preceded by indiscriminate publication of her many portraits and much puffery of her "intellectual acting," and now an audience that filled every seat in the theatre, and had undoubtedly paid for a great many of them, was rewarding her efforts with applause that was loud, and, to the inexperienced ear at least, genuine and spontaneous. But after the final curtain had fallen on a performance that had many of the outward and visible signs of a great success, and the electrician—that god of the *avant scène* to whom all machine-made stars turn pleadingly on first nights—had pumped the last call out of the audience and reluctantly turned on the lights, a veteran of our stage who had been studying the actress with keen attention from the moment of her first entrance, turned to his companion and said, positively, almost explosively:

"She'll never do in the world. She hasn't learned to listen! And listening is nine-tenths of acting!"

The woman of whom these words were spoken has disappeared from our stage; the applause that greeted her has long since died away, the talk of her "intellectual acting" is no longer heard in the land, and the public has turned back to its old favorites and to one or two new ones. And of these old and new favorites, some are beautiful and others are ugly; some have good voices and others bad; some rant and others speak too low, but we may be quite sure that not one among them all has won a secure place on our stage without mastering the art of listening, for that is the one absolute essential in the art of legitimate acting.

Very few laymen, and, strange as it may seem, not very many actors have ever considered the supreme importance that listening plays on the stage; yet, broadly speaking, listening and the use of the voice constitute the entire technique of the art of acting; just as form (including perspective), and color may be said to constitute that of painting. And of the two, listening is the more important, because it survives in pantomime, a most difficult form of acting which does away with the use of the voice.

The reason why listening plays a part of such paramount value on the stage is that if an actor is not deeply interested in what is going on in the mimic world in which he has been cast, he cannot look for any real interest on the part of his audience; and the only way in which he can denote that interest is by the intensity with which he listens to everything that has any bearing whatever on his life and actions, and the skill with which he expresses the feelings bred of what he hears.

Listening is an art that is not properly taught in the schools in which modern actors are trained, for while voice culture has the place of high honor that it deserves in the curriculum of every academy on Broadway, if you ask either teacher or pupil about the still more important business of listening the chances are that you will receive no reply save a wondering shake of the head.

So much has been said about "temperament," "mentality," "facial expression," and "personality" that it is a very easy matter for a school-girl to persuade herself that she has in her the makings of a great actress. All she needs is what she calls a "few lessons."

One young woman, indeed, told me that she had been studying the art of expressing various emotions by means of a series of contortions of visage, all more or less hideous to behold, but that she had not been taught anything about listening. In short, although she had learned how to make her various emotional grimaces it had never

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occurred to her that unless she could show cause for these curious expressions of joy or grief or rage or whatever they were called in her "Complete Hand-book of Acting," her audience would not understand what she was driving at. But if she had been taught to listen with a natural interest and attention, the emotions called forth by what she heard would be certain to betray themselves convincingly on her face. Like many another unfortunate, this deluded young woman had begun to learn at the wrong end and had been taught the effect, not the cause of emotion.

Despite the fact that not one teacher in a dozen realizes its importance, there is no ear-mark by which hopelessly bad acting is more quickly recognized than an inability to listen to what is happening on the stage. Certainly no actress who is thinking about herself or preparing for her "facial expression" or wondering whether the critics are going to call her "intellectual" or not, will find time to pay attention to what is said to her. Lovers may come and go, parents plead and command, messengers appear before her with tidings of death and disaster—and all without awakening in her any indication whatever of interest. And we may be quite sure that if she is not interested in the fate of her stage loves and kindred the audience will not be either.

I remember once watching a very pretty young woman, of whom much was then expected, in a scene in which other players, among them the late Mrs. Gilbert, took part. Both she and Mrs. Gilbert were presumed to have a deep interest in what certain of the characters were saying, and I remember to this day the manner in which the elder actress—in many respects one of the best of our time—listened while she knitted, pausing now and then to drop her needles while she looked up with a look of keenest attention on her face, and then resuming her work with a deprecatory shake of the head or a half-smile and a gentle nod which told more plainly than words her full understanding of what she heard. She was not doing this to obtrude herself on the attention of the audience, but simply because she knew that without the interest which she showed the picture in which she had a part would be incomplete. Standing by her chair was the young woman of whom I have spoken. She, too, was presumed to have a keen interest in what went on about her, but she might as well have been deaf and dumb for all that her face and manner revealed. She did not even look at those who were speaking. On the contrary, her gaze was turned upon the audience and one could see by the complete lack of all expression on her placid face that what interested Mrs. Gilbert was no sort of concern of hers. In professional parlance she was "waiting for her cue." Imagine anyone in real life "waiting for a cue"! Imagine a young woman standing with a look of bovine contentment on her face while someone tells her that her lover has committed suicide, that her sister is engaged, and that the house is on fire! Never once during the evening did that young woman gain the confidence or good-will or interest of the audience, despite the unusual possibilities of her part. Not appearing to care about anything, she could not make her audience care, and her beauty and rather remarkable vocal gifts went for nothing. And, like the beautiful woman from beyond the seas who was so accurately "sized up" by the veteran of the American stage, this young woman has long since passed from the public ken; the papers have ceased to print her pictures and the voices of the unknowing and injudicious admirers that were once lifted in praise of her "Art" are hushed forever.

A survival of pantomimic listening may still be found in those familiar circus-ring scenes in which the ring-master, the horse, the "little lady," and the clown take part, and in which the clown, the one really essential factor, must be a good listener or the audience will not be entertained, while the horse, who does not listen at all, could easily be dispensed with.

In the old-fashioned minstrel show it was absolutely necessary that the interlocutor should be a good listener and that he should be able to assume a profound interest in the questions propounded to him by the end-men. Sometimes, when the jokes hung fire, he had to arouse and compel the interest of the audience by artfully repeating the question in the thoughtful manner of one who had listened to every word and was revolving the problem in his own mind.

"Do I know why a chicken goes across the street? No, Mr. Johnson, I confess that I do not know why a chicken goes across the street. Won't you be good

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enough to enlighten us and explain to us why it is that a chicken goes across the street."

And the more serious he is, the more impressive his utterances, and the deeper his apparent interest in the motive of the chicken's migrations, the greater will be the delight and the laughter when the audience learns that the chicken crosses merely to get to the other side. But eliminate the element of listening from this little dialogue and reduce it simply to the question and answer, unsupported by the interlocutor's crafty art, and the joke would fall flat.

After all, it was in the old-fashioned variety theatres that the art of listening reached its highest state of cultivation, and it was not until that art began to decline that variety became metamorphosed into "vaudeville" and the famous old teams began to die out and to be replaced by imitators, monologue artists, impersonators, and others who did not need to listen because there was nothing for them to hear except their own voices.

It was a keenly critical audience that filled the variety theatres in those days—an audience that demanded so much entertainment for its money that it was no easy matter for an unknown team to get an engagement even in the cheap East Side houses that cultured Fifth Avenue affects to despise. And if it was difficult to secure a hearing in those days it was even more difficult to maintain the foothold so hardly gained; nor did it take young performers long to learn the necessity of packing into their ten or fifteen minute acts the greatest possible amount of action, music, dancing, repartee, or whatever elements went for entertainment. The street chestnut vender, heaping his half-pint measure full to overflowing and pressing it down with generous hand, was their model. It would not do for one of the team to remain idle while the other furnished the entertainment nor would it do for one to interfere with his mate, so they studied the art of aiding or "feeding" one another, by intently eager listening. Sometimes the listening was accompanied by a look of appreciation and sometimes with manifestations of disgust or envy, but it never failed to stimulate the interest of the audience.

They learned, moreover, to keep their audience constantly in mind, for the one who played the part of the listener was unconsciously putting himself in the place of an auditor, and this gave him no chance to think about himself or his "facial expression" or the movements of his body or his lessons in "voice culture" or any of the things that so obviously fill the minds of our young dramatic students, to the utter ruin of all histrionic effort. And, as in the course of time each member of the team found his true *metier*, it generally came to pass that there was one funny man and one feeder, but so smoothly did they work together that the public knew them as the funny Russell Brothers or Ward and Vokes or MacIntyre and Heath, giving equal credit to both and seldom distinguishing between the two. In fact, very few people know to this day that Heath is the feeder of his firm, and Johnny Russell of his, and Vokes of his. If they knew they might make unjust discriminations, whereas it is only variety actors themselves who know enough to give credit to the feeder, whose art is even rarer than that of his partner, the comedian.

Indeed, there are very few laymen who know that it takes two men to be funny—one to read the comic lines or do the comic thing and the other to listen with the proper expression of wonder or delight or rage and perhaps to suggest the act or ask the retort-provoking question.

The self-satisfied dramatic school product of to-day scorns the idea of feeding another actor in order to give a scene its proper value and the art seems to have fallen into decay in modern vaudeville, for I do not at the moment recall a single variety team of the first rank that has not graduated into the legitimate. There are still, to be sure, a great many fine entertainers or monologuists or impersonators, such as Vesta Victoria, Vesta Tilley, Chevalier, Beatrice Herford, Cissy Loftus, and many others who do not depend on one another and neither feed nor are fed when they make their effects. Entertainers of this sort are almost certain to fail when they essay legitimate acting, and, as every rule has its exceptions, I may mention Nat Goodwin and David Warfield, both of whom were formerly imitators or impersonators, but who are now in the very first ranks of the legitimate.

To recite the deeds of the old feeders of the variety business would be to relate the

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beginnings of some of the most popular actors of to-day, but it is worth our while to record the fact that two of the very best farcical entertainments that ever gained a permanent place in the esteem of New York playgoers were literally founded on the art of feeding as the variety stage understood it. One of these entertainments was Harrigan and Hart's Theatre Comique and the other Weber and Fields' Music Hall.

The Harrigan and Hart farces were the best in point of local color and character work that the town has ever seen. They were performed by a company made up almost entirely of variety teams like Wild and Gray, Goss and Fox, Tiernan and Cronin, the Sparks Brothers, and others, not one of whom who had not been trained to listen. And it was largely because of their knowledge of this art that men who had previously been classified simply as "knock-about" or "black-face" comedians quickly developed into actors of no mean skill.

Weber, Fields, and Bernard were also trained listeners when they began to appeal to Broadway audiences, and the delight that their impersonations gave to the public is a matter of too recent history to require mentioning.

Perhaps the very best example of legitimate comic acting that our stage has seen in many years was that afforded by Weber, Fields, and Sam Bernard—all from the variety stage—in their famous "Skindicate" scene in which each actor had the benefit of two "feeders" for everything that he said or did.

One night, many years ago, when Weber and Fields were dressing after their turn in an East Side variety house, a card was brought to them bearing the name of Joseph Jefferson, and a moment later the most distinguished actor on the legitimate stage of America was ushered into the presence of the delighted young variety actors. He complimented them both on the superior quality of their work, told Fields how much he had enjoyed his comedy, and then turning to Weber, said: "You certainly have learned how to listen, and you look so serious while you are doing it that you double the value of your partner's work. That is acting, my boy."

This was high praise, indeed, coming from one who was not only the acknowledged dean of the dramatic profession, but also one of its very best listeners, and it left a lasting impression on the mind of the young performer to whom it was addressed, proving conclusively that he who was sometimes called "a mere feeder" was really the master of a most creditable and necessary art and one worthy of careful study and serious consideration.

And it was because of this important element of listening that, after the famous team had separated, the public missed something—it did not know exactly what—in Fields that it had never missed before, for Fields had always profited by the skilful manner in which Weber, the listener, had "fed" him in their comedy scenes. But Weber, who had never depended in the least on Fields, was regarded as just as good a comedian as ever.

The recent success of Miss Katherine Grey, now considered one of the most promising of the newest stars, is none the less interesting because Miss Grey has succeeded on the entirely legitimate lines of listening and the use of the voice. Agnes Booth, who is herself one of the very best listeners on our stage—if she were not she would not be one of our best actresses—asked Miss Grey where she had learned to listen so well, and received this answer:

"I was advised to study Joe Weber for listening and I've been doing it for the last six months."

In the gifted Madame Alla Nazimova, we have, it seems to me, an actress who listens altogether too well. By this I mean, that, fully understanding every line of Ibsen, she hears more than her audience does, more even than the author intended to be heard, and seeks to express in her face and by her voice all that she has heard. It is an unfortunate tendency and one that will in time render her mechanical and perhaps even convert her into an "intellectual actress"—of the kind that console themselves for the indifference of the public by the panegyrics of the ignorant and the half-baked.

There is no moment in the performance when listening plays a more important part and none that an experienced actor is less likely to slur over or ignore than that in which the applause of the audience summons the popular favorite before the curtain. Stand by an actor in the wings when this call comes and watch him as he pre-

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pares to answer. Not until he has pulled himself together and gotten out of his rôle in the play and into that of the public's humble and most devoted servant will he pass out into the glare of the footlights. Once there, he will stand with lowered eyes and in an attitude that shows him to be drinking in every bit of the enthusiasm that reaches his ear, listening to the tumult of shouting and hand-clapping as intently and with as profound an emotion as if it were a part of the play, and expressing in return his sense of his gratitude to his auditors, his delight in their pleasure, and his own unworthiness of the reward that they have given him.

There are even times in grand opera when a singer is obliged to depend upon listening to retain a hold on the audience. Clara Louise Kellogg once described to me a moment of this sort. In rehearsing for the first performance in this country of Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" it was found that at the moment in which the sailor suddenly appears in the doorway, transfixing Senta with his look, there occurs the space of about thirty-six bars during which the two singers must stand regarding one another with rapt attention to an accompaniment of rumbling, uninteresting, unromantic music. How to fill in this long interlude—and thirty-six bars is a very long time indeed on the stage—without losing their hold on the audience was a problem that seemed to all concerned one of appalling difficulty. No one in the company had ever seen the opera performed, but the stage manager happened to possess the composer's *brochure* which described in detail how each and every scene should be played. Its instructions were for the two singers to stand perfectly motionless and *listen,* as by so doing an interval even twice as long could be passed over. The scene was played according to these directions, and Miss Kellogg found that in order to maintain the tension of body necessary to hold the interest of the audience it was necessary for her to grip the back of a chair firmly with both hands. To speak literally, it was her ability to listen to her own heart-beats—for of course nothing was said during this scene—that enabled her to hold her audience; and her success in this most difficult bit of acting gave her a fuller knowledge than she had ever possessed before of the vast importance of listening as part of the art of the stage.

It is recorded in the memoirs of Edwin Booth, edited by his daughter, that he considered Salvini's Othello, in the great scene in which Iago implants in his mind his suspicions of Desdemona, the finest individual piece of acting that he had ever seen in his life.

This scene has always been considered Iago's great opportunity and more than one famous actor has either made a reputation or added materially to it by his playing in it. It is Iago who does all the talking, all the suggestion, all the "acting." Every word that falls from his lips is freighted deep with significance to Othello and—what is of infinitely greater importance—to the audience. There is no one in the whole house who is not hanging on Iago's utterances and wondering to what length he will dare to go. The sort of actor who judges a part by the number of words that it contains would choose Iago for the opportunities it affords in this scene and would regard it as inconceivable that an actor should be willing to take his chances in Othello, who must remain dumb and has no opportunity at all.

All Othello has to do in this scene is to *listen* to the words as they fall from the crafty Iago's lips. That was all Salvini did when he made a greater impression on the enlightened and critical mind of Edwin Booth than had any other player of his time. All he did was to listen! But what listening! Iago might have been a phonograph for all the audience cared. No one looked at him, no one thought of his "facial expression" or his "intellectuality" or his "naturalism" or whatever other qualities his admirers may have claimed for him, and it mattered but little whether he read his lines intelligently or no. There is no actor living bad enough to strip all the meaning from the words that Iago utters in this great scene. The audience knew well enough what every sentence meant, and in watching the effect of each one on Othello soon lost all interest in the actor who delivered them.

And as Salvini listened he walked in a circle, wide as the stage, around the rascal who was poisoning his life and lighting in his heart the murderous flames of jealousy —walked as a panther walks round the edge of its cage—and as he walked he *listened,* pausing now and then in his stride

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to stand with arms tensely folded across his chest, the blood lust gleaming in his eyes and every lineament of his face reflecting the suspicions, the passions, the jealousies kindled in his heart by Iago's every word. It was this wonderful listening that paved the way for the supreme moment when, in a sudden and uncontrollable frenzy, he sprang upon his informant, hurled him to the ground, and, towering above him like an avenging fury, poured forth a torrent of Italian invective that was like an overwhelming flood of lava from the mountain's height.

It was, perhaps, the most effective moment in the play—this awful outburst of passion long suppressed—but the great acting part of the scene was that in which he listened, and by listening not only stored up in his heart the tremendous fires of emotion that were bound to have their vent, but also woke in the hearts of his audience a full comprehension of what rage and jealousy meant when aroused in such a nature as his, and prepared them for what was to come.

To have taken the listening out of this great scene would have been to render his climatic outburst a comparatively meaningless thing. For all that an actor can do is to compel his audience to share his feelings, and if he has not feeling enough to plainly express to his audience they will take but slender interest in his passions and sorrows.

Clara Morris has written many interesting things about the New York stage as she knew it during one of its most noteworthy periods, and not the least interesting of these is her story of how, on her return from London in the very early seventies, she described to her manager, Augustin Daly, a new actor who had at that moment taken a strong hold on the English public through his performance of a well-worn part in an old time melodrama.

And her narrative possesses a peculiar and unique value because her dramatic intuition, her sense of proportion, and perhaps also her own technical training and experience, led her to put her finger at once on this artist's highest quality when Mr. Daly asked her what he did that seemed to her so remarkable.

"It was what he did not do—what he left to the imagination!" she answered quickly, and then she described in detail his first entrance, telling how he came into the warm inn, chilled to the bone, and sat down to remove his leggings:

"He drew a great colored handkerchief and brushed away some clinging snow; then leaning forward, with slightly tremulous fingers he began to unfasten a top buckle. Suddenly the trembling ceased, the fingers clenched hard upon the buckle, the whole body became still, then rigid—it seemed not to breathe! The one sign of life in the man was the agonizingly strained sense of hearing! His tortured eyes saw nothing. Utterly without speech, without feeling, he listened — breathlessly listened! A cold chill crept stealthily about the roots of my hair. I clenched my hands hard and whispered to myself: 'Will it come, good God—will it come, the thing he listens for?'

"When, with a wild bound, as if every nerve and muscle had been rent by an electric shock, he was upon his feet; and I was answered even before that suffocating cry of terror—'The bells! The bells!'—and under cover of the applause that followed I said: 'Haunted! Innocent or guilty, this man is haunted!'"

And the actor who gained his first great success by his mastery of listening proved strong enough to live down the many mannerisms and eccentricities of speech and gesture that furnished food for talk to the light-minded and to become in time the one dominant figure on the English-speaking stage and to gather about the name of Henry Irving a halo of public respect and honor that made his knighthood look cheap and common in comparison.

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· THE POINT OF VIEW ·

WHATEVER sins of irreverence may have been laid at our doors in the past, we Americans are nowadays vastly respectful of our ancestors; and even though there may be those among us who are somewhat lacking in deference to an immediate and present progenitor, a grandfather seven times removed is very much appreciated. Ancestors are a great comfort in prosperity and an even greater solace to those who are somewhat down in the world; and the founders of our "Patriotic Societies" have been humane enough to keep the dues low, so that even a person of modest means need not be debarred from their privileges. For this is the era of "Patriotic Societies." The number of "Sons" and "Daughters," of "Descendants" and "Dames" seems endless; and still the possibilities have not been exhausted, for when we are through with celebrating the achievements of our forefathers, there are our foremothers to draw on. The Daughters of Anneke Jans, for instance, might form a large society, considering that a generation ago most of the New York families of Dutch descent claimed to be in the line of inheritance from her, while you met Heirs in every State of the Union. The good dame certainly rendered important service to the Province, and as one of her descendants I permit myself this suggestion.

The Gentle Patriot

Although men and women alike swell the rolls of these societies, it is perhaps to women more especially that they appeal, and to the middle-aged rather than to the young. It is now some time since the Woman's Club ushered in the Golden Age of the elderly woman. As a witty and well-known woman of letters remarked, it gave her an interest and a sense of individuality at about the period of life when her husband had taken to calling her "Mother" and when her children thought her a little too old for any amusements but those of a grandmother. But the so-called Literary Clubs of the small city and the country town have worked her rather hard, poor dear, and she has grown somewhat tired of prescribed courses of reading and of listening to "papers" from the pen of the unready writer. It is easier and more amusing to hunt up pedigrees and—with her papers properly made out and her small yearly dues paid—to sit back and enjoy a sense of distinction. As a matter of fact, the gentle patriots do take themselves seriously, yet when all has been said, the societies have done much to justify their existence. Not to mention the effort to awaken an interest in American history by prize essays and memorial tablets, and only alluding in passing to the timely rescue of many records which in careless hands bade fair to be lost, they have been most valuable agents in counteracting a spirit of narrow provincialism. At their meetings, the North and the South, the East and the West come together. New England learns that good may come out of the Middle West, the Southerner finds the Yankee Dame as well bred as herself, and she of the Pacific coast is kin to them all. It is well for fellow-citizens to get in touch with each other and in this big country such factors as these meetings are not to be despised.

As to the pious work of commemoration, some of it is surely very much worth while. Notably so was the recent restoration of the old church at Jamestown; and unexpectedly impressive were the simple ceremonies with which it was given by the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. At first sight it seemed a trifle absurd for several hundred ladies to get out of their beds at daybreak on a rainy morning and embark on an excursion from which they were only to return at midnight, merely to listen to a few speeches and to see a tiny church, newly built after the pattern of the old one. But with the landing at the deserted spot where the little church with its ruined tower stands amid the old gray tombstones, all was changed. What is there in a mere procession that is in itself so thrilling? The skies had cleared during our journey down the river, and when the last of us crossed the gangway the youthful company of the Governor's Guard, with their clear-cut young faces, their dark blue and white uniforms and big white plumes, were standing, drawn up in line; and the surpliced choir,

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walking two and two in the sunshine over the green grass, singing the processional, were followed by a long train of men and women who, from guests at a reception had suddenly become pilgrims to a shrine. All at once we realized vividly the greatness of the event which we had come to celebrate. Those colonists, who had builded better than they knew, were to us as our nearest of kin and their graves seemed but freshly made.

Nor should we forget the Society which antedated most of the others and preserved to the nation the home and the grave of our greatest citizen. Once a year its representatives, the Regents of Mount Vernon, meet to transact the business. From all parts of the country they come—a company of gentlewomen who for a brief time live in the old house and walk in the old garden with its box-tree borders. Visitors there always are, but for a few weeks these ladies are at home in the house, sleeping and eating, attending to the business of the estate, sitting together of an evening, talking and laughing in their gentle, well-bred voices. One can quite fancy that the illustrious master and mistress of the house would choose this time to revisit it.

The Motor Car in Fiction

WE have learned to bear the speeding motor car of the crossways, and have grown used to its *chug, chug*, as it brings the odors of the nether world to our sweet, leafy country roads, but it is with a certain dismay that we realize how fully the last retreat of a quiet mind, literature, has been invaded by the machine. I can think of few recent American tales where it has not been a chief feature; we can dodge it upon the highway, but who can dodge it in the magazines? The escaping villain uses it only to be overtaken by the victorious hero in one of better make; the eloping lovers find it indispensable; philanthropy disdains any other vehicle for swift rescue of suffering; birth and death seem unworthy and burglary unsuccessful unless associated with it; and, in the matter of adventure, whether it dashes off the cliff into the sea, or, wrecked by striking miners, serves as a barricade for the besieged capitalist, it has no rival. We find it pictured on every spot of earth from desert sand to mountain height, and Kipling's "They" shows it running between the visible world and the invisible. It has dimmed the glory of the foot-ball tale, tarnished the splendor of the yachting romance, and made the bicycle, amorous or adventurous, a thing of the past. As England moves through Shakespeare's historical plays, dim hero of the whole, represented now by Richard, now by John, now by Henry, so the automobile moves through our fiction, the true hero, mere man being introduced chiefly to manage its exits and its entrances. The thing becomes alive; pleased fancy plays with it as a cat with a feather, imagining it sentiment. With the good auto we become heroic and perform wonderful deeds of prowess; with the bad auto we are frankly villainous and add murder to our other crimes; breathlessly we speed with the detective auto, the very Sherlock Holmes of manufactured things, in ferreting out crime. In fine, this has absorbed all known motifs, and no novel or story can *go* without its motor car.

This obsession of both novelists' and readers' minds may well give us pause for wonder as to whether we are not all machinists at heart, and our American art of fiction merely a fanciful way of dressing up the latest invention. Often the story is but an excuse for display of knowledge about the working of brake and lever, and one could compile a book of directions for running the motor car from so-called bits of imaginative literature which tell just how the hero or his chauffeur went from second to third or fourth speed. No small boy is so completely absorbed in his Christmas train of cars as is the contemporary public with this toy. Our earlier literature is not yet aware of our master passion. Irving's "Sketch Book," for instance, with its account of life on a sailing vessel, is full of sweetest thought and fancy. If this were rewritten, up to-date, would not the boat instead of the man be the hero, and should we not have pages of details about sheets and main-masts and top-sails?

Besides monopolizing subject-matter and absorbing motif and character interest, the machine in question has vitally affected our literary technique, and action in our stories has come to be but of the kind associated with wheels. The desire to get a free road on which to move swiftly, without obstruction; the rapid-transit finish; the necessity of making the climax identical with the goal of the car, especially in the case of collision, have deeply influenced our art. We are shown so much on these excursions that we cannot see at all. There are pleasant vistas of human life on which our eyes would fain linger, but—whoop!—we are past with a skurrying sound of rapid words—and many a character left lifeless by the

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way! What are the police doing that they set no speed limits to our fiction?

To some of us, who hold that more than a competent knowledge of machinery is necessary to make a novelist, the new achievement brings a sense of loss. It is all very well to say with Kipling:

> "Lord, send a man like Bobbie Burns to sing the song of steam,"

but it has not as yet pleased the Lord to send a man like Bobbie Burns, and, if he came, could he make literature of gasolene? The author has abandoned Pegasus, or perhaps Pegasus—no colt to grow accustomed to new things—has taken fright at the machine and shied away forever. The new rendering in art of muscular action seems but a poor substitute for the brave old revelations of the mind and heart of man and of woman, and, to tell the honest truth, they *tire* us, these new-fashioned tales. Let the novelists take warning, for we have still the refuge of real literature left and may, in mental defence, be compelled to go back to the books printed on paper made to last.

Meanwhile, if contemporary literature must cling to mechanical devices, let, oh, let the inventor of the flying machine succeed quickly, for we are tired of noise and of odors, and that inspiration would be very poetry as compared with this. There are moments when we have faith to trust that our motor-car fiction is but a *passing* fashion; otherwise, who can tell on what desolate and sterile outskirts of life it may leave us, stranded and overturned?

Reformed Speech

THE utterances of Mr. Henry James on American speech were full of the proper importance of the subject; but it is not apparent that if he felt the desirability of the reform he to the same extent perceived the difficulties of it. Not perhaps that it would be difficult to induce a number of young college ladies to speak with a nicer enunciation. If classes should be formed for the purpose—of which there have been threats—we might, indeed, see achieved some notable results in preciosity. But preciosity and high-schoolese were not quite what our critic had in mind.

A consideration of Mr. James's own style of writing proves to be illuminating in this connection. It is a style in which usual, and mostly homespun, words are fearlessly repeated many times over. The general effect is not homespun; it is of great elaboration, because Mr. James's meanings are not primary, and he flashes them upon us indirectly through the maze of many phrases. But each phrase, taken by itself, is made up of the sort of simple, well-bred words that make no pretensions. This is the speech of cultivated England. It is the speech of all England, cultivated or not. The difference will lie in the intonation; but there will always be the same nonchalant willingness to keep the well-worked plain parts of speech working still.

Now a half dozen adjectives (this, of course, does not point to Mr. James) will not express as many things as a half-hundred. And to be content mainly to stick to the half-dozen implies that you are content to let a good many matters go by unexpressed. This is much more naturally the attitude of countries where persons and things have their fixed place, than of countries where it pays to score individually, to be brilliant, to make effects. It is also more naturally the attitude of a people rather incurious intellectually; or, more properly, that has been rooted and grounded long enough to have got the knowledge that many things that one can be eager and curious about are really not worth the eagerness and curiosity.

In other terms—just as Mr. James says—speech expresses the manners of a country, voices its civilization. The civilization, then, must be changed before you can radically change the mode of speech. Those among us who are at the point of knowing what beautiful speech is, and of caring for it, are swamped by the floods of the rest of us who are inexhaustibly coming newly forward with a great eagerness to score, and so much to say in the onrush that we cannot possibly stop to think of pitch, modulation of voice, and suitability of words. These things come as a result of a *feeling* for them first. We simply have not yet the feeling. If colleges and "culture" clubs could give it, especially to our women, who want it most, we should have it. Alas, they can't; and they don't.

These matters being as they are, it is possible to understand, and even sympathize with the viewpoint of the Englishmen who like our manner of speaking best when we speak in George Adesonian. This seems to come from the roots. There *is* a feeling back of it. And being genuine is next to being distinguished, when it does not come before.

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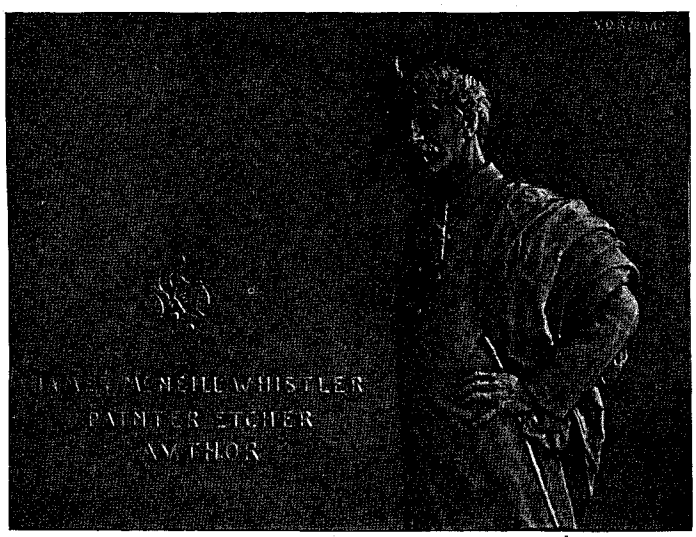
THE FIELD OF ART



Whistler plaque, by Brenner.

DIE-SINKING

NINE years ago there was published in these columns a study of recent die-sinking;* and the continued disregard in the United States of this noble art invites a further discussion of the subject. It is matter of great regret that we have to record no success as yet in the establishment of that school of medal-engraving which some years ago had been founded under what appeared to be favorable auspices. The National Academy of Design and the American Numismatic and Archæological Society, acting together, had undertaken the task, and Mr. Victor D. Brenner was chosen as the teacher of those who might come to be taught.

Apparently there came but few such students. It will not do to say that the desire to learn a trade rather than a more artistic ambition inspired most of those few candidates; moreover, it sometimes happens that the very best results may come from the pushing of a trade-pursuit on, and still further on, until it becomes an art. Who will not recall the triumphant later career of those sculptors who have begun by chasing silver sword-hilts, or casting clock tops in bronze? And yet there is a certain feeling which pervades a class or a school; and the group of students which we are considering at this moment never impressed its supporters and best friends with the probable artistic importance of immediate results. At all events the school has come to an end, and the community can only hope that such a living interest in the art may yet be excited, among artists and possible patrons alike, that we may have medals of our own. For not every sculptor is a medallist. To produce a bas-relief, two feet or ten inches in diameter, is not to design a medal or a coin. It is, at most, a preliminary study for a medal or a coin. It is like a small sketch for a big picture. It is as if a statuary were to undertake a portrait figure, and were to begin with a life-size study of his model; with which at hand he might venture to design a statuette or a heroic, ten-foot monumental statue. The life-size model he would *not* exhibit.

So with the medallions shown in the illustra-

* See The Field of Art for October, 1898.

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tions to this article. They are the finished works of art, wrought in the steel die by the sculptor's own hand, impressed upon the softer metal under his direction.

Fig. 1 is the obverse of a medal by Caunois, with the portrait of Voltaire in very high relief. The reverse is of no artistic importance, for it gives merely a legend with dates of birth and death and this statement—that the medal belonged to a *Galerie Métallique des Grands Hommes Français*. Moreover, the raised letters of this legend are in the rather uninteresting style of the epoch—1817. We are left wondering how so spirited a head can have come out of that period—assuredly not a favorable one in the records of modern art. And again we feel surprised at the appearance of such a publication in the very earliest years of the Restoration; a series made up of Frenchmen chosen for other than political reasons—for the only other medallion which I have met with of the series is that dedicated to Rousseau.

Fig. 1—Voltaire medal, by Caunois.

Such an art may flourish, indeed, when the great schools are most inactive. At the mint in Paris on the Quai Conti, the famous *Hôtel de la Monnaie*, there is a museum of the coins and medals which have been struck at that establishment during the centuries; and in one set of cases are those of Bonaparte and of Napoleon. There was to be recorded a brief career enough. Between Marengo and Waterloo there were less than sixteen years, years of no great artistic glory, as we are apt to think; and yet in that short space of time over four hundred medals were struck in honor of the conquering politician and soldier. Nor are they despicable or ugly—those small bronze bas-reliefs! They represent a grade of art which is sufficient for its purposes, a very intelligently organized art of display: and they confirm the impression of those who find that France has risen nearly always to the task set her. During the wars of the Revolution, the business of the Republic, under Consul or Emperor, was to hold Europe at bay in thought as well as by arms; and the spirit of the time is well exemplified in the Bonaparte medals.

Such medallions, struck in honor of this and that eminent man, are not unknown in our own time. The celebrated Anton Scharff, of Vienna, cut, in 1893, that one which offers the head of the poet, P. K. Rosegger. This is given in Fig. 2; and the reverse of this medal is the really charming pastoral scene shown in Fig. 3. This last is one of the best examples that could possibly be furnished of the true and legitimate use of sculpture in connection with landscape subjects. A lady who sits beside me says that this might almost be a painting; and that is true, except that a second glance will show how much there is expressed which a painting of

Fig. 2—Rosegger medal, by Scharff.

Fig. 3—Rosegger medal, by Scharff, reverse.

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equal simplicity would not express. Here is that astonishing light and shade which is not laid upon the surface, but which nature supplies to those who will give her a modulated surface to work upon. If the photographic reproduction in this case should be at all successful, the sculptured mask of the jolly and spirited girl who is going with the reaper to "rake after" will be found as interesting a piece of bas-relief as anything in our galleries of life-size portrait heads. In parts of the background there is a more feeble treatment; and yet the landscape, in low relief and of delicate outlines, is as genuine a piece of nature study as even a very admirable water-color on the walls of our galleries. The small incised legend on the right gives the name of that one of Rosegger's friends to whom this special bronze copy was assigned.

Fig. 4—Scharff medal, by Pawlik.

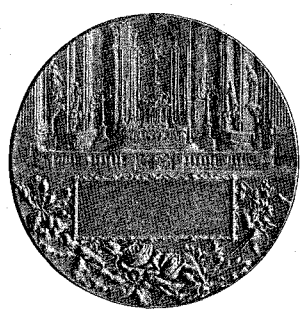

Fig. 5—Marriage medal, by Roty.

That reverse is in low relief as to its background; including the genius of the open country who, with her harp, is poised in air; but it is in relatively high relief as to its figures. The bust of the poet, on the obverse, is in unusually high relief for a struck medallion, for it is easy to see that the bas-relief which is produced by the impact of the steel die upon the softer metal will give a sharp and beautifully defined result only in case the intaglio cut in the steel is not incised beyond a certain relative depth. In the Rosegger as in the Voltaire, the relief seems to have reached the extreme limit possible to coinage; and by coinage is meant that which is struck with the *coin*, that is to say, which has been brought into shape entirely by pressure—the more ductile metal passing, as if it were wax, into the smallest interstices of the hollow die which receives it.

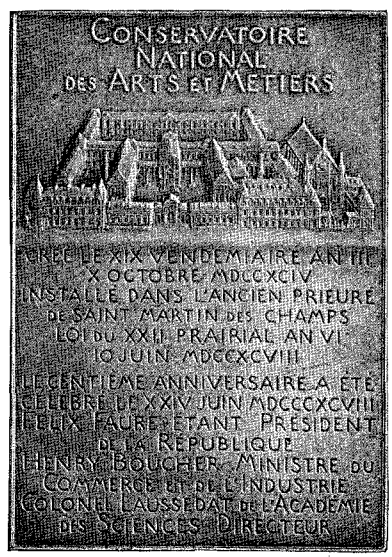

Fig. 6—Plaquette, by Patey.

This little series of portraits may conclude with Fig. 4, the very impressive head of Scharff himself, struck in the same year, at which time he was forty-seven years of age. The die-sinker in this case was X. Pawlik. On the reverse are a not very realistic palm branch, and a sprig or two of laurel, and the words Dem Oesterreichischen Meister der Portrait Medaille zur Feier seiner 25-Jährigen Künstlerthätigkeit, "To the Austrian Master of the Portrait Medallion on the celebration of the 25th year of his artistic work." A very minute legend at the foot of the reverse sets forth that the Vienna club of coin-and-medal-amateurs have brought this work to completion.

In our article of 1898 there was given the obverse of the famous Marriage Medal by Oscar Roty, and in Fig. 5 is presented the second or later Marriage Medal, which has a rather commonplace group on the obverse. There are two different reverses among the copies which are in hand, one of them giving a rather conventional round altar hung with ivy leaves, and bearing a lily, while Cupid's torch burns on the ground beside it, and various other attributes poise in the air. The other reverse is more to the purpose, as given in Fig. 5. It is probable that the idea of the 25th or the 50th anniversary was in the mind of the designer of this medal. Copies of it struck in gold, which can be bought, now and then, would seem to be intended as gifts for the fiftieth wedding anniversary.

The great artist Roty is seen in a good light in the Charles Christofle

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commemorative plaque. Of this the obverse, a parallelogram two and a half by three and three quarter inches, gives, as it were, the boy's meditations in the open country and the beginning of his work among the smoking chimneys of Industry, and between them the mature man seated at his task, while a genius stands before

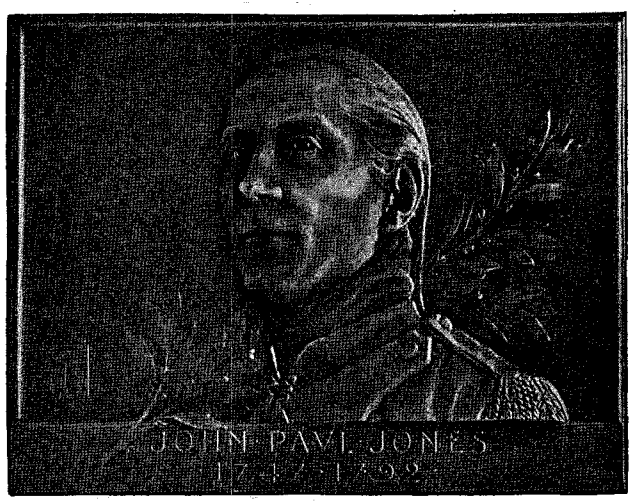

Fig. 7—Paul Jones plaque, by Brenner.

him holding a goblet on high, with the inscription, "Science applied and popularized." Then the reverse gives the workman in his *sabots*, making electrotypes, with the great tank and the coiled wires denoting his occupation, and another artist in *sarrau* delicately chasing a goblet, while his tools, in slender vases, stand on the counter beside him. Between these bas-reliefs is a long inscription, setting forth the achievements of Christofle and the date (1842–1892) of the foundation and the fiftieth anniversary of his establishment, with the names of his successors—all members of his immediate family.

A similar plaquette by A. Patey is of peculiar interest because of the architectural group on the reverse—see Fig. 6. This represents the great group of buildings known as the *Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers*. This was the famous monastery of S. Martin, in Paris, and buildings of the fourteenth century still remain in excellent condition, though others of much later epoch have been added. It is now a great establishment of industry and practical art, and is one of the glories of the capital of France. What is interesting in the coin is the ingenious and tasteful placing of the building upon the small field around it, in relatively high relief and perfect expression, while yet no one can say that good taste as a matter of sculpture has been overpassed.

The obverse of this plaquette shows personified Science opening a case full of working models which she seems to explain, while students take notes and draw from what is set before them.

Mr. Victor D. Brenner, the teacher in whose hands was that class in die-sinking established by the two institutions named above, has been a pupil of Roty, and a similar spirit inspires his work. The reaching forward to a more realistic treatment of the figure, and of human subject generally, than has been thought practicable in medallions, is visible in these pieces. Fig. 7 is the obverse of his Paul Jones medallion, struck at the time of the transportation to America of the body of our first naval officer of distinction. The curious type of face, with the eyes so very near the crown of the head, and so very much more jaw and chin than anatomical propriety demands, may all be taken as furnished by the bust which was Mr. Brenner's only serious study for the head. This was that famous bust taken from life by Jean-Antoine Houdon, which is now owned in America. The reverse of this piece bears the incised inscription, "America claims her illustrious dead. Paris. Annapolis. 1905" —and it represents Fame blowing her trumpet and carrying funeral wreaths, while in the background an artillery wagon, drawn by three horses and draped with many flags, bears the coffin to the ship. The horses are ridden postilion-wise by French dragoons, while American marines are marching beside the car.

The reproduction on page 509 is the obverse of the Whistler medallion, by the same artist, more recent even than the Paul Jones memorial; and the reverse of this bears a magnificent peacock on a perch, with the easily understood legend in raised lettering: "*Messieurs les Ennemis!*"

R. S.

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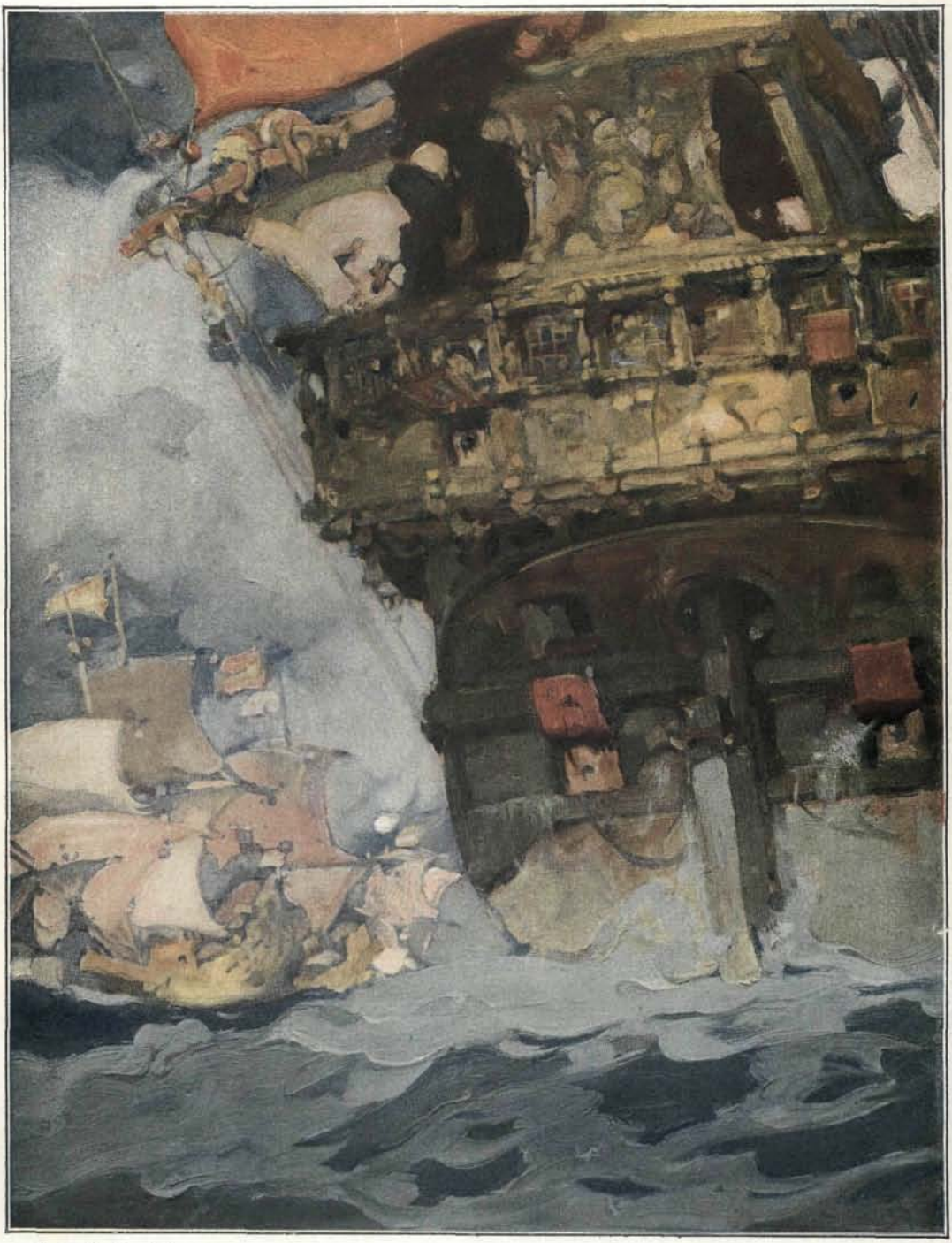

Drawn by Frank Brangwyn.

THE IMMORTAL FIGHT OF THE LITTLE "REVENGE."—Page 517.

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